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THE
TOTA KAHANĪ;

OR,

TALES OF A PARROT,

TRANSLATED FROM

SAIYID HAIDAR BAKHSH'S HINDŪSTĀNĪ

VERSION OF

MUHAMMAD KĀDIRĪ'S PERSIAN

ABRIDGEMENT OF

NAKSHABĪ'S TŪTĪ NĀMA.

BY

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MY DEAR SIR,

It gives me great pleasure to dedicate to you this little work—with all its defects, and perhaps occasional errors—that, by so doing, I may testify my admiration of the talent and industry displayed by you during a long course of years, in your numerous valuable publications connected with Oriental literature; and may express my gratitude for having so long enjoyed the honour of your esteemed correspondence.

Praying that your valued life may be prolonged, and that your "shadow may never be lengthened,"

I remain,

My dear Sir,

Respectfully and gratefully yours,

GEORGE SMALL.

LONDON, Nov. 1, 1874.

P R E F A C E.

THE Totā Kahānī is one of the most popular of works among the natives of India, of all classes and creeds. In palaces and huts, in schools and zanānas, it is read with avidity, again and again. Originally composed in Sanskrit, under the title of *Shukasaptati*, i.e., “The Seventy (Tales) of a Parrot,” it has been translated—or rather, the substance of it *transferred*—into most of the Indian vernaculars; generally in a very abridged and mutilated form. In A.D. 1330, a version of it was made in Persian by Ziyā,u-d-Dīn Nakhshabī, an elegant writer both of prose and poetry, whose work, consisting of fifty-two Tales, was entitled the *Tūfi-Nāma*. Two other versions in Persian, containing the same number of Tales, are extant, one of an earlier and the other of a later date

than that of Nakhshabī. Lastly, in A.H. 1208 (or about A.D. 1793), Muḥammad Khodādād Kādirī produced, in the same language, a greatly abridged version of the work, written, as he says, “in familiar and easy language, so as to combine the usual epistolary style with that of ordinary conversation befitting persons of high rank,” instead of the “difficult and abstruse style” of Nakhshabī. An edition of this abridgement of Kādirī’s was printed in London, in A.D. 1801—accompanied by an English translation, on alternate pages, which had been originally published in Calcutta a year or two before. The popularity of the Persian Tales, induced that eminent Orientalist, Dr. J. B. Gilchrist (then Professor of Hindūstānī at the College of Fort William in Calcutta), to get a good translation of them made into the Urdū dialect. The native Maulavī selected by him for this purpose—Saiyid Haidar Bakhsh, of Delhi—proved himself well fitted for the task. But instead of a mere translation of Kādirī’s abridgement, he produced a work resembling, both in style and in size, as much the version of Nakhshabī as that of Kādirī. The baldness and brevity of the latter he improved upon by the introduction of much of the

ornateness and amplification of the ~~former~~, the result being a more *readable* book than that of either.

I have not been able to meet with a copy of the original Sanskrit work—the *Shuka-saptati*—nor to ascertain whether or not the *bais* and *kiṭās* in Nakhshabī's translation are versions (or imitations) of *Slokas* and other metres occurring in the Sanskrit text. I think it highly probable that they are; it being a favourite custom with Sanskrit as well as Persian authors—especially in lighter literature—to intersperse their narrative prose with poetry, borrowed or original. The *Hitopadeśā* and *Gulistān* are familiar instances of this.

Nakhshabī's work is so interlarded with Arabic poetry, proverbs, &c., as to suggest the conjecture that there may have been also in existence an *Arabic* version of the *Shuka-saptati*, which was more immediately his model—if not his original—than the Sanskrit work, though *professing* to be a version of the latter. I have no authority, however, for asserting that such Arabic work is extant, or ever existed; and Nakhshabī's quotations may be accounted for by

his familiarity with the classical language and literature of the East, and a weakness for displaying it.

The poetry occurring in Haidar Bakhsh's Urdū version seems, in general, to be rather imitations than translations of his Persian model. Such, at least, is the conclusion I have come to from a casual comparison of the two works, for I confess that I have never perused the larger Persian version, though I have that of Kādirī. The authorship of only a very few of the verses in Haidarī's work have I ventured to name, and that on the authority of my old and esteemed friend Syed Abdoollah, whose extensive acquaintance with Persian literature enabled him to recognise them; and to whom I may here acknowledge still further obligations. Shortly before his return to his native land (after about twenty years' residence in England), he kindly allowed me to read over to him, text in hand, a large part of my Translation, suggesting corrections or improvements, and assisted me also as to the meaning of several passages towards the end of the book. As, however, I did not always accept his readings and suggestions, the whole responsibility of this version lies on my own shoulders.

To Mr. J. T. Platts I desire likewise thankfully to acknowledge my indebtedness. That rare Oriental scholar (author of an erudite edition of the *Gulistān*, an excellent translation of the *Ikhwānu-ṣ-ṣafa*, and other valuable works), I more recently consulted on one or two rather abstruse pieces of poetry, to which I have referred in my notes, and for which valued aid I would here tender my thanks.

A few words I must add as to my objects in making this translation, and my *modus operandi*. In undertaking it I had primarily in view the assistance of those young gentlemen who, having to prepare—with limited time and also limited means—for undergoing certain examinations in Hindūstānī, either qualitative or competitive, would thankfully acknowledge such translation as a precious boon. Often had I been asked by my own pupils if such a work existed, but the only thing I could tell them of, or offer, was the very faulty English version of Kādirī's Persian abridgement, referred to above.¹

¹ My own copy one of my pupils borrowed, some years ago, before going to India—and forgot to return. I have never been able since to fall in with another copy, and the book is now rare.

But besides students of the language, I had also in view an (I trust) increasingly numerous class of readers, viz., those ladies and gentlemen who take an interest in India and its inhabitants, and who would gladly become acquainted with Oriental literature without the necessity (with many an impossibility) of mastering the languages of the originals.

For both the above classes of readers—and also, I would fain hope, for some of that too numerous class who read *only* for *amusement*—I feel confident that the present translation of a most popular Indian novel (though *not* “three-volumed”), will prove acceptable intellectual *pabulum*.

Keeping these different sorts of readers in view, I have endeavoured to make my translation as close to the original as the merest tyro in the language could desire—giving in foot-notes the *literal* renderings of all the poetry and more intricate sentences—while, at the same time, as far as consistent with this, I have sought to give it rather the appearance of an *imitation* than a translation, and to make it altogether a thoroughly readable book, and racy withal.

The texts I have had before me are those edited by Dr. Gilchrist and by Dr. Forbes—the former (a lithographed quarto) published at Calcutta, 1839—the latter (printed) in London, 1862. Dr. Forbes has expunged from his texts several sentences which he deemed scarcely “fit for ears polite,” nor suitable for being read by young men in class. These I too have omitted. Those words or clauses which have been introduced in my translation to make it read more fluently, or needful to express the *full* sense, though not literally in the original, have been included in angular brackets, thus: []. While those words or clauses which are enclosed by semi-circular brackets, are either parenthetical sentences in the *original*, or else merely explanatory of the previous word, or giving an optional rendering.

I shall conclude these remarks with an apt quotation from the Preface to Professor F. Johnson’s elegant and scholarly edition of the Gulistān. Speaking of the “masterly translation” of that Persian work by Professor E. B. Eastwick, Mr. Johnson says, “In this translation, the poetical portions of the Gulistān, which occur in almost every page, have for the first time,

been rendered into English verse; and it may be affirmed that Mr. Eastwick has managed not only to render faithfully and successfully the meaning of the author, but to infuse a good measure of his spirit and raciness. Beyond this a translator cannot be expected to go. The privilege of appreciating the force, and marking the beauties of rhythm and alliteration which prevail throughout the original, and have so powerful a charm for the Oriental ear, is reserved as the student's reward for the patience and pains bestowed in the acquisition of the language."

This *last* remark applies to the "original" which *I* have taken in hand to translate. I shall feel abundantly rewarded for all the pains bestowed on it, and feel highly flattered, if critics in general should accord to me the praise bestowed in the *previous* passage in the above quotation. I have endeavoured to copy Professor Eastwick in his admirable translation of the Gulistān, the Bāgh O Bahār, and other Oriental works. It is a wonder—and to be regretted—he did not undertake the Totā Kahānī also, with which he is, no doubt, thoroughly familiar.

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THE PREFACE OF HAIDAR BAKHSH.

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

THANKS to that God, who, from the cloud of His grace, hath bestowed on the ocean of language the pearl of intelligibility ; and, for the sake of His own praise, hath made the tongue of man capable of speech ; and, for the purpose of [making] intercession on behalf of us sinners, hath created His Holiness (Mohammad) the Prophet of the last age—a blessing to the universe—by reason of whom the earth and sky have attained stability.

A God so great one cannot but adore :

His goodness to describe no pen hath power.

The Prophet, for our sakes, to earth He sent.

And Prelates, for the Church's government.¹

¹ *Lit.*, "He truly who is such an object of worship (God) is greater than the pen can describe. He sent the Prophet for our sakes ; Executors of His will [too] and religious leaders (*waṣīs* and *imāms*) He created."

The [writer], Saiyid Haidar Bakhsh—whose poetical surname is Haidarī—a native of Shāh-Jahān-Ābād (or Delhi) was brought up at the court of Nawāb 'Alī Ibrahim Khān Bahādur, of blessed memory, and was the pupil of the Maulavī Ghulām Husain of Ghāzi-pūr, and [latterly] a protégé of that illustrious linguist and patron of literary men—John Borthwick Gilchrist Sāhib Bahādur—a mine of generosity and fount of liberality—a sea of beneficence and kindness—a fountain-head of science and clemency—lord of lords—may his dignity endure for ever !

Although he has also, more or less, a familiarity, to the best of his ability, with the Persian language—yet, in accordance with the command of the above-named gentleman—in the year of the Hijra 1215, answering to A.D. 1801, during the government of the chief of the nobles of the world—protector of the friendless poor and the cream of grandees of lofty rank—privy councillor of the King of England—whose palace resembles the planet Saturn, [viz.,] the Marquis Wellesley, Governor General, Bahādur (may his dignity ever endure!)—he [the said Haidar Bakhsh] translated into the Hindustani tongue, in prose, according to the high Urdu idiom—in an easy and good style, and with pleasing and elegant diction—the *Tūtī-Nāma* of Mohammad Kādirī (the prototype of which was the *Tūtī Nāma* of Ziyā-ud-dīn Nakhshabī) and gave it

the name of Totā Kahānī—in order that the work might be more readily intelligible to tyros [in the Indian tongues.]

And this ignoramus (Haidar Bakhsh) hopes that whatever literary man looks over this translation with an attentive eye—should any wrong rendering or incongruity of expression meet his observation—he will, with the sword of his pen, cut it off (as he would the head of his foe) from the page of existence.

All grief, O my God ! from that man far remove,
His pen who shall handle this work to improve.
God grant—for the sake of his Prophet and Friend—
This tale may be speedily brought to an end ! ¹

We will now proceed with the Tale itself. It is worthy of the reader's attention, what pains the author has taken in the performance of his task.²

¹ *Lit.*, "Whoever, for the sake of rectification, shall use his pen upon this [work] O God ! never give to him any grief. O God ! for the sake of the Imām (head priest) of mankind, [grant] that this tale may speedily be completed !"

² *Lit.*, "I have reached the main-point. One ought to hear what blood of his liver he (the Translator) has swallowed, and what thought he has bestowed [upon his work.]"

THE TALES OF A PARROT.

TALE I.

OF THE BIRTH OF MAIMUN, OF HIS MARRIAGE WITH KHOJISTA,
AND OF KHOJISTA AND THE PRINCE FALLING IN LOVE WITH
EACH OTHER.

AMONG the wealthy men of olden times there was a certain person, named Ahmad Sultān, who was very rich, and maintained an army at his own expense. A hundred thousand horses, 1500 chains of elephants, and 900 strings of camels of burden used to remain standing at the door of his palace; but no male child had he to be the light of his father's house.

"This thought his heart with grief oppressed,
His home no cheering lamp possessed." ¹

On this account he used, morning and evening, to visit godly devotees and beg an interest in their

¹ *Lit.*, "The wound of this very thing was on his heart,
He had not a lamp of his house."

prayers. The result was that, after a while, the Creator of Heaven and earth graciously bestowed upon him a lovely boy, with a countenance like the sun and a forehead like the moon. The joy that this boon imparted to Ahmad Sultān made him to bloom like a rose, and [as expressive of his feelings] he gave him the name of Maimūn (*Felix*). Having distributed among the Fakirs some thousands of rupees and pagodas, he returned thanks to God, and repeated this couplet :—

"On mercy bent, no hindrance Thee retards;
Let no one, then, despair of Thy regards."¹

During three whole months he entertained at public banquets all the Amirs and Vizirs, the professors and men of learning and accomplishments, residing in the city. On these occasions, he had placed, before some, trays [filled with presents]; and, on most of his guests, he bestowed very costly *khil'ats* (or robes of honour).

When the boy was seven years old, he entrusted him to the care of a learned and accomplished teacher for his education. Beginning with his "Aleph, Be," he, in course of time read through the Gulistān, the Inshā-

¹ *Let.*, "To Thee shewing mercy there is no delay (or, obstacle) :
Let not an expectant be disappointed by Thee."

e-Harkarn, the Jāmi'-ul-Kawānīn, the Abu-l-Fazl, the Kūsafī and the Rukā'at of Jāmi (in Persian). He acquired a knowledge, too, of Arabic and its literature, and learned the rules of etiquette at court, and the proper modes of addressing superiors. The fact is, that in some of the sciences, his attainments surpassed even those of his father.

When the latter perceived that he had reached the years of puberty, he gave him in marriage to a lovely young damsel, in full bloom,¹ named *Khujista*.² They both began to experience reciprocal pleasure in each other's company, and were [almost] never separated.

It happened that Maimūn went out one day in his palanquin to take a turn in the *bazaar*, and there he observed a man standing with a parrot's cage in his hand. So he asked the parrot seller, "You fellow! what is the price of that parrot?" He replied, "*Khudāwand* (*i.e.*, my lord, or 'monsieur,') I won't part with it for less than 1,000 pagodas."³ Maimūn said, "Well, I trow, whoever gave a thousand pagodas for that handful of feathers would not have his match

¹ *Lit.*, "rose-bodied."

² *Khujista* means "happy," "fortunate."

³ The *hūn*, or *hun*, (better known in Europe by the name "pagoda") is a gold coin, formerly current in most parts of India, the average value of which is said to have been about eight shillings (Haughton). We question if it be current anywhere in these days; and, indeed, gold coins of any kind (even the *mohar* or *ashrafi*) are now becoming rare in India.

as a ninny; why, it is only a mouthful for a cat." The parrot seller could give no reply to this; but the parrot thought to itself, "if this wealthy nobleman do not purchase me, it will be the occasion of opprobrium and infamy (to me), inasmuch as the companionship of the great and the wise is the means of intellectual growth, and from this companionship I am at present excluded." So it replied, "Fair-countenanced young man, although, in your eyes, I appear small and despicable, yet, by reason of my wisdom and intelligence, I can soar above the sky,¹ and literary men are astonished at my pleasing discourse and sweetness of tongue. You had better purchase me, on this account [—if for no other]—that my meanest art consists in this, that all the events of the past and of the future I can tell at the present moment, and what is to take place to-morrow I can foretell to-day. [As an instance of this], if you will allow me, I shall just make one representation which may prove to your advantage."

Maimūn said "Tell me what you refer to." The parrot rejoined, "In a few days a caravan of merchants will arrive in this city for the purpose of buying spikenard. You [take my advice, and] from this moment having purchased up all the spikenard to be had, from all the shopkeepers of the city, hoard it up at your own

¹ *Lit.*, "strike my feathers on the throne" (viz., of God, i.e., the highest heavens).

premises. When the caravan arrives and the merchants find that, except at your mansion, not a vestige of spikenard is to be obtained at any house in the city, they will have no other resource but to come and beg it of you. You can then sell it to them at your own price, and thus your profits will be very large."

Maimūn was greatly delighted at these words of the parrot, and giving the man 1000 *hūns*, purchased the bird, and took it to his own house.

Next morning he sent for all the spikenard dealers and asked them the present price of the article. They replied, "The price total of all the spikenard in our different shops is 10,000 *hūns*."

Maimūn immediately caused 10,000 *pagodas* to be given them from his treasury, and having purchased the whole quantity, had it stored up in a certain building. Two or three days after, the Cābul merchants entered the city and began to search for *sūmbul*. When they could find none anywhere [else] they at last came to Maimūn, and [beseeching him] with supplications and tears [to sell it to them], purchased the whole stock at four times its [original and proper] price and set out with it to their own city.

Maimūn was greatly delighted with the parrot after

this, and began to look upon it as dearer to him than his own soul. He was induced, too, to purchase a Maina (or shārak)¹ as a companion to it, in order that it might be relieved from the ennui of solitude; for sages have said :

“ Birds of a kind together flock,
Pigeon with pigeon, hawk with hawk.”

Maimūn accordingly placed a Maina beside the parrot, for this reason, that they are both of the same species, [hoping] they would be comfortable and happy together.

Some time after he said to Khojista, “ I am about to set out on a tour by sea and land, in order to visit several cities. Whatever you may take it into your head to do, don’t do it without consulting these two birds. Consider that whatever they say is right, and be always obedient to them.” Having impressed upon her these few admonitions, he set out for a certain city. As for Khojista, she, for a few months, was constantly weeping on account of his absence, and could neither eat by day nor sleep at night. Meanwhile the parrot tried ever and anon to make her sorrowful heart forget its [griefs] by recounting various

¹ The *shārak*, or *Maina* (“*Gracula Religiosa*”), is a bird of a dark colour, that talks like a parrot—a sort of jay, or starling, according to Shakespeare and Forbes.

tales and pleasing stories. In this way, by amusing and wheedling her, he managed for six months to keep her from sorrowing. To be brief, it so happened that, one day, after having bathed and adorned her person, she ascended to an upper storey of the house, and from a lattice window began to take a survey of all the alleys in the bazaar; when a prince, riding leisurely along on horseback, passed [close by the house] and, happening to direct his eyes upwards, saw Khojista. As soon as he saw her, he became enamoured with her, and she, at the same time, lost her heart to him. Unable to restrain his passion, the prince sent a message secretly to Khojista, the same hour, through a deceitful female, to the effect that, if she would come to his house for four hours, he would in return [for the favour] give her a ring valued at a *lākh* of *hūns*.¹ That old woman went to her immediately and said, “O Khojista, that prince has sent for you, and promises that, in requital for one hour (of your company), he will give you a ring worth a *lākh* of *hūns*. If you will go and make his acquaintance, he won’t stop at that; but will ever [afterwards] behave kindly towards you. At first, indeed, Khojista was much offended and angry at this proposition, but at last she was coaxed over by the old hag, and said to her,

¹ A *lākh* (or *lac*, as it is commonly written) is 100,000. Taking the *hūn* at eight shillings, the said ring would be worth about £40,000—which we may regard as a bit of Oriental exaggeration.

“Very well, give him my affectionate *salām* (salutation) and say to him, that at night I shall manage to get to him by the best means I can think of. This message the procuress conveyed to the prince. Meanwhile, as soon as it was dark, Khojista, having arrayed herself in her finest apparel, and with her jewels, sat down on a chair, and thus began mentally to talk to herself. “Let me go and tell the whole affair to the Maina, and having got her permission, then I can go. For I am a woman, and she is of the same sex. In all probability she will listen to what I have to say and will give me leave.” Having thus determined in her mind, she went to the Maina and said, “O Maina, something wonderful has happened; if you will listen, I shall tell you all about it.” She replied, “My lady, say what you have got to say, and then I, too, to the best of my judgment, will make my remarks.” Her mistress then thus begun: “To-day, having ascended to the top storey of the house, I was peeping through the lattice-window, when, meanwhile, a certain prince passed by this way and fell in love with me. This hour he has sent for me to his house. If you say the word, I will go and have an interview with him; and then, after two or three hours, I shall come home again.” On hearing these words, the Maina was exceedingly enraged, and making a great outcry, began to say, “My lady, fine behaviour this you are setting forth! and nice words you are making me listen to!

Well done! so you would go to a strange man's house, and having formed an attachment with him, bring disgrace upon your husband! This is very naughty of you; what will the people of your family say to it? Beware of such misconduct!"

As soon as she heard this, Khojista, pulling the poor bird out of its cage, wrung its neck, and seizing it by one leg, dashed it so forcibly on the ground that its spirit took its flight to the skies. She herself, thus filled with rage, went her way to the parrot, and thus addressed it. "O parrot, have you seen what has happened to the Maina? what was her condition but a minute ago, and what has now become of her?" He replied, "Yes, madam, I have; whoever acts insolently to his master (or mistress) will experience a similar fate." Then Khojista, delighted [at his reply] proceeded to say, "O parrot, many days have passed since I have seen even the form of a man, and to-day a royal prince has sent me a most pressing invitation; if you say [I may do so,] then I will go to him to-night and at dawn of day I will return home." The parrot, being frightened, began to say to himself, "If I too forbid her, or say anything to the contrary, then immediately I shall be killed, just as the Maina was." Thus thinking, he proceeded to say, "My lady, the Maina was a weak-minded creature, and the female sex is generally deficient in sense. For this reason,

it is advisable for those who are wise never to tell their private affairs to those of that sex ; but rather, [as much as possible] to keep aloof from them. You keep yourself easy, but do nothing rashly. As long as my soul is in this body of mine, so long will I look after your interests. Don't be so much disconcerted. The Merciful One (God) will smooth your path for you. If, which God forbid, this affair should be divulged, and, getting wing, should reach your husband, and he, on his arrival, should be angry with you, then I shall concoct a story and reconcile you to one another, in the same way as the parrot reconciled the merchant, Ferokh Beg to his wife.

“How goes the story about him?” asked Khojista, “Tell it me at full length, and I shall be greatly obliged to you.”

THE STORY OF FEROKH BEG AND HIS PARROT.

“In a certain country,” said the parrot, “there lived a merchant named Ferokh Beg, who was very rich, and who had a sagacious parrot. It so happened that the merchant had to go on a journey. He then made over to the care of the parrot all his household goods, along with his wife, and set out himself for a certain [distant] country on business, where he remained for several months, engaged in mercantile pursuits. Some days after [his departure,] his wife formed an

improper intimacy with a certain young man, the son of a Moghul, whom she used constantly to invite to her house at night—engaging in amorous dalliance with him till the morning. This conduct of the two the parrot saw, and heard the conversation that passed in their private [and illicit] intercourse; but, considering what he saw as *unseen*, and what he heard as *unheard*, he remained silent. At the end of eighteen months the merchant returned home, and demanded of the parrot a true and particular account of all that had taken place in his house, saying: ‘During my absence how have things gone on, and what has each person been doing?’ The parrot gave him a full and exact account of the conduct of each [of the other members of the household], but did not inform him of his lady’s proceedings; because [he thought] if he were to tell that also, there would certainly be a separation between the two, and the life of one or other of them would be sure to go.

“At the expiration of a fortnight, the merchant having heard from some other person the particulars of his wife’s amour, was much annoyed and angry with her. For the sages have said, ‘Love and musk cannot remain concealed, any more than fire can lie hid among gunpowder.’ The merchant, in consequence, having lost his confidence in the parrot, began to say to himself, ‘Alas! this parrot has told me

nothing whatever about *her*, either good or bad.' And being enraged at his wife, he punished her very severely.

"The foolish woman thought that, perhaps, the parrot had said something about her, which had brought upon her so great a calamity; so, supposing the parrot to be her enemy, she one day availed herself of a favourable opportunity, at midnight, to pluck off all his feathers, and fling him out of the house, screaming out at the same time, 'Alas, alas! the cat has run off with my parrot!' She thought to herself that, no doubt, the poor wretch must be dead; but, though he had sustained a severe shock by the fall, still some little life remained in him. After a while, he recovered some degree of strength and vigour, and with an effort, was able to raise himself up.

"There was a cemetery close by, into which he entered, and took up his abode in the hollow of a tomb. All day long he was dying of hunger, but at night he used to creep out of his hole, and whenever any traveller happened to arrive in the burial-ground, and to take his evening meal there, the poor bird used to pick up and eat whatever fallen grains and broken morsels of food he could find, and then, after drinking a little water, would, at dawn, go and seat himself again in his hole.

“After some days, all his feathers made their appearance again, and, by little and little, he began to fly ; so that, fluttering from tomb to grave, and from grave to tomb, he roamed about, picking up [whatever he could find to eat]. So far as to what happened to the parrot. Now listen to what took place, meanwhile, at his master’s house.

“On the morning succeeding the night on which the parrot disappeared, the merchant, as soon as he rose from his bed, went straight to its cage, but saw that the bird was no longer there. On perceiving this, he dashed his turban on the ground, and made a great uproar. He was excessively distressed, and enraged with his wife to a degree that it is impossible to describe. His grief, after that, was such that he could neither eat nor sleep. He would not believe a word that his wife said [in exculpation] but drove her out of his house. The [poor] woman then thought to herself thus, ‘My husband has turned me out of house and home ; now all the residents in the town will speak ill of me ; the proper thing for me to do is this ; to repair to the burying-ground in the neighbourhood of the house, and, neither eating, nor drinking, nor sleeping, there to die.’

“Finally, to the cemetery she went, and fasted entirely one whole day. When night-fall arrived the

parrot called out from his hole in the tomb, 'O woman ! shave off the hair of thy head with a razor, and remain for forty days in this burial-ground without water or food, that I may give thee absolution for the sins of thy whole life,* and restore amity between thee and thy husband.' The woman was astonished at hearing this voice, and began to think to herself, 'In this cemetery there must be the tomb of some pious saint ; assuredly it is he who will absolve me from my sins, and reconcile me to my lord.' With this expectation, having got her head shaved, she remained for some days in the cemetery.

"One day the parrot, emerging from the tomb, thus addressed her : 'O woman ! without any fault on my part, thou hast plucked out my feathers and imposed upon me severe affliction. Well, let bygones be bygones : what thou hast done to me was written in my destiny. But I have eaten thy salt and am the purchased property of thy husband. Thou art my mistress, and dutifully will I serve thee. It was I who spoke to thee the words [thou heardest] out of the hole in the sepulchre, and rely upon it that I am a truth-speaker. I am not a backbiter, that I should tell thy faults to thy lord. See, now ! I will go straightway to thy husband's house and will reconcile him to thee.'

“Accordingly, the parrot having thus spoken, repaired to his master’s abode, and salaaming him, according to the rules of etiquette, made his obeisance and implored a blessing on him, saying, ‘May thy life be prolonged and thy wealth doubled.’ He replied, ‘Who art thou and whence hast thou come, who, standing thus respectfully, bestowest on me thy benedictions?’ Then, recognising him, he forthwith added, ‘Where hast thou been all this while, and in whose house hast thou been a guest? Give a full account of thyself.’ The bird answered, ‘I am your old parrot; a cat took me out of the cage and ran off with me, and I have been in her stomach.’ His master asked, ‘And how have you come to life again?’ The parrot replied, ‘You turned your innocent wife out of the house, and, seizing her by the arm, thrust her forth a houseless wanderer. On this account she betook herself to a cemetery, and there remained fasting for forty days, weeping and wailing uncontrollably; till, at last, the Almighty (praised be his name) hearing her complaint, took pity upon her, and restoring her once more to life, said to me, ‘O parrot, do thou go to her lord, and bring about a reconciliation between the two; moreover, bear testimony to her chastity.’

“When his master was made aware of these particulars, he rose up, full of joy, from where he was

sitting, and mounting his horse, went to his wife and thus addressed her : ‘ My darling, I have punished and distressed you, though guiltless of any fault ; but overlook what has happened, and come, forgive my offence.’ She readily consented to do so. Then he brought her back to the house, and from that time forth, the two, husband and wife, lived together in the utmost harmony and mutual affection.”

Having thus finished the story of “The Merchant and his Parrot,” Maimūn’s parrot said to Khojista, “ Rise, my lady, and go quickly to the young prince, that your promise may not be broken. Should the tidings reach your husband—which God forbid—and he be angry with you, then I, like the merchant’s parrot, will clear up matters for you.”

Khojista was delighted at these words, and determined to go to the prince at once. But, just then, the white streak of dawn made its appearance, and her visit was, in consequence put a stop to. Raising her eyes to heaven, she repeated this stanza, while in an agony of grief she rent her collar, as a rose [is rent when it bursts into bloom].

“ The meeting of two friends is barr’d by Fate,
Who union of all sorts appears to hate.”

The night of meeting is by her, again,
 Into a day of absence turned—and pain.”¹

Inasmuch as Khojista had kept awake the whole of the night for the sake of hearing the story, she now retired for repose; and as soon as she laid her down on her couch, she fell asleep.

¹ *Lit.* “This [Fate] does not cause (permit) two hearts (*i.e.*, lovers or friends) to be seated in one place. The union of any one is not agreeable to her. She is the enemy of union. Separation is heart-burning: [yet Fate] turns the night of union into a day of separation.” The lines are from a *masnawi* of the celebrated poet Mir Hasan of Delhi.

TALE II.

THE FIDELITY OF A SENTINEL TOWARDS THE KING OF TABRISTAN, WHO REWARDED HIM BY MAKING HIM HIS HEIR-APPARENT.

WHEN the sun had set, and the moon arisen, Khojista rose from her couch, and having washed her hands and face, sat down. She then sent for a tray of food and fruit, and partook of some; after which, having arrayed herself in splendid attire and with costly jewels, she became exactly like a bride; and taking with her two fairy-like attendants, she repaired in great glee to the parrot, to ask his permission [to visit the prince], and thus she addressed him: "O parrot! if you will kindly give me leave, then I will go to him and give vent to the amatory emotions of my heart."

The parrot replied, "My lady, be of good cheer, and have no anxiety, for I shall exercise the utmost

zeal and diligence in the furtherance of your project. The time is not far off when¹ I shall succeed in introducing you to your ~~lover's~~ lover's presence; but it is proper and requisite that you, too, should retain in your heart love and friendship for him, just as the sentinel preserved in his heart fidelity towards the King of Tabristān,² in requital for which he obtained enormous wealth."

Khojista asked, "How runs the story about him? Relate it to me at full length."

The parrot proceeded to say, "The wise men and our ancestors of olden time have thus related—that once upon a time the king of Tabristān prepared such a banquet as resembled [a feast in] Paradise. At this convivial meeting there were set forth the most delicious viands and choicest liquors, as well as all sorts of roasted meats. Princes, ministers of state, nobles, philosophers and professors, along with all the accomplished gentlemen of the city, were present. While these were partaking of the victuals, and imbibing the wines, a stranger suddenly entered the royal assembly. Thereupon, the banqueteers, one and all, demanded of him who he, a foreigner [to all ap-

¹ Or, there is every probability that. *Lit.*, "It is near," or "likely."

² A country (or district) now included in Mazendran—south of the Caspian Sea.

pearance] might be, and from whence he had come. He replied, 'I am a gladiator and lion-hunter; and such is my skill in archery, that my arrow has at times shattered a hard rock—nay, even pierced through a mountain. In addition to this military dexterity, I am acquainted with various arts, and know a great many sciences. I was formerly a servant of the Amīr Khojind, but as he had no appreciation of my worth, and thought nothing of my skill, I abandoned his service and am now come to the king of Tabristān. If he will engage me, I will continue here, and will exhibit at all times the utmost devotedness and fidelity.' The king of Tabristān, on hearing this, gave orders to his servants and officials, that they should immediately bestow upon the man the post of sentinel [at the royal palace] adding that, after ascertaining [his abilities and worth], whatever should be deemed proper should be done regarding him.

"In compliance with his Majesty's command, the pillars of state, (*i.e.*, nobles) at once assigned to him the office of [royal] sentinel, to which he was accordingly promoted. And so, every night, from eve to morning dawn, he used to remain awake for the sake of keeping watch over the palace, and to stand looking towards the royal abode. One night, it so happened that the king was taking a turn about midnight on the balcony [of his palace] when his eyes fell upon the

sentinel. He observed some one standing on the alert ; whereupon he asked, ‘ Who are you, you fellow there ! standing below by the palace at this time [of night] ? ’ ‘ My lord,’ said he, ‘ I am the sentinel of the royal abode ; for several days past I have remained here from evening till dawn for the purpose of keeping watch over the seraglio, and I have been hoping I might see the august countenance of his majesty, and have my eyes enlightened thereby. To-night, at length, Fate has befriended me, so that I have obtained a sight of the Sovereign of nations—which has rejoiced my heart.’ Just then a voice reached the king’s ear, coming from the direction of the [neighbouring] jungle, which said, ‘ I am going ; who is the man that will bring me back ? ’ On hearing these words, the king was astonished, and said to him, ‘ Sentinel, do you hear that voice or [know] whence it comes ? ’ He replied, ‘ For several nights past, your majesty, I have heard this voice, after midnight, but, as I have to attend to my duties as sentinel, I could not leave the palace, and therefore have not been able to discover whose voice it is, or from whence it proceeds. But, if your majesty desires it, I will go at once, and, having speedily ascertained, will report to your illustrious Highness [the result of my investigations].’ The king said, ‘ Very good, go quickly, and bring me back accurate information about it.’

“The sentinel forthwith set out [to prosecute his enquiries and] to bring back word. He had gone but a little distance when the king also, having thrown round him a black blanket with which he concealed his body and face, went after him.

“The sentinel had gone but a short distance—when, lo! what does he see? a handsome and lovely woman is standing in the road under a tree, and uttering these very words: ‘I am going—let me see who is the man who will bring me back, and not let me go?’ He then asked her, ‘O beauteous fairy-like lady! who art thou, and wherefore hast thou, for several nights past, been repeating these words?’ She replied, ‘I am the embodied representation of the life of the King of Tebristān: its appointed term has now expired; therefore I am going.’ On hearing this declaration, the sentinel said, ‘O image of the life of the King, is there now any means by which thou mayest even yet be prevailed on to return and come back?’ ‘Sentinel,’ she replied, ‘on one condition [I will]; if thou wilt slay thy son as a vicarious substitute for him, then I will assuredly return—so that the king may yet prolong his life for some days in this world, and not speedily die.’ These words the king, too, heard. The sentinel, filled with delight, responded, ‘O lady, emblem of the life of the king, I am ready to devote both my *own* life and that of my son as a sacrifice and

oblation for the life of the king. Be not in haste, but remain standing here—and I will immediately go home and, having brought my son, will slay him in thy presence. I will give him up unreservedly¹—for the sake of the king's salvation I will put him to death.'

"In short,—having said this, he went to his house, and thus addressed his son. 'To-day the appointed period of the king's life is completed—at any moment he may die. But, if thou give thy life up for his,² then by thus dying he will live, and remain for some time longer in this world.'

"On hearing these words, the loyal and noble-dispositioned boy at once replied—'Dear father!³ the king is just and equitable; in comparison with a prince so liberal, so courageous, charitable and compassionate, what am *I*? If your whole family were required, then you should not withhold it: but, for a worthless individual like *me* to be sacrificed for him—is not worth speaking about! whereas, if *he* continue to live,

¹ *Lit.*, "Lift up my hands from him."

² *Id.*, "To him."

³ In the original "*kibla wa ka'aba*. The *Kibla* is the point towards which worshippers turn in prayer, more especially the city of Mecca. The "*Ka'aba*," literally, "any square building," specially denotes the Temple of Mecca. But both words are frequently used as terms of respect and confidence in addressing a king, or a father, &c.—*Kibla-e-'ālam* ("kibla of the world") being restricted to royalty; while "*kibla gāh*" ("the place of *kibla*") and "*kibla-e-kaunain*" ("the kibla of both worlds") are applied usually to a father, or a beloved and revered friend.

he will secure the maintenance of a whole nation. You had better, therefore, take me away quickly, and sacrifice me vicariously for him : so shall I secure to myself the happiness of both worlds ; for, in the first place, there is your command [or promise, which must be fulfilled] and in the second, there is the [duty, or honour of] being sacrificed for such a king. Hence there can be nothing better in this world for me, than this [to take place].

“‘I heard this remark made by my teacher (the mercy of God be on him) who used to say to all the children in the school—both big and little—that, ‘if for the safety and happiness of the king, any royal official were to slay one of his subjects, it would be no sin, because he is the cherisher of his servants, and supports hundreds. If *he* shall live, then every city will remain populous ; but if he die, then a tyrant will arise, who will ruin thousands, and hundreds of thousands will perish through his tyranny and violence.’ It is, therefore, your bounden duty to take me away quickly and put me to death on his behalf. If one such as I be offered up in his stead—then what of that ?’

“Finally, the sentinel took his son to the woman, and having bound him hand and foot, stooped down with the intention of cutting his throat with his sharp

dagger,¹—upon which the woman seized hold of his hand and said, ‘O sentinel, slay not thy son, nor cut his throat! thy prowess has touched with compassion the Most High God, and, in mercy, He has commanded me to remain in the king’s body for sixty years more.’

“When the sentinel heard this gladsome news he was delighted, and immediately set out to convey the tidings to the king. These transactions the King of Tabristān had himself witnessed with his own eyes, and had obtained accurate information, too, of the conversation between the sentinel and his son. Moreover, before his (the sentinel’s) return, he (the king) by running, had managed to reach the balcony, and there, according to custom, was pacing backwards and forwards. About half an hour after, the sentinel himself came into the illustrious presence, and, having made his salutation, proceeded to invoke benedictions [on his Highness] saying, ‘May the age, and wealth, and glory and honour of the King of Kings continue increasing till the resurrection!’

¹ *Khanger*, the word here used denotes a short, broadish sword, or large poniard. It is the real origin of the term “hanger,” applied by us to the short sword worn chiefly by sailors in the navy, or marines—though in Dr. Johnson’s Dictionary it is derived from the verb “to hang.” The Persi-Arabic letter *jīm*, is often (in Syria, Egypt, &c.) pronounced hard as *g* in “gun.” Thus the Arabic word for a hill, or mount, is pronounced either *jebel* or *gebel*.

“ ‘ Well, sentinel,’ asked the king, ‘ what about the voice ? If you have ascertained anything, then tell me in detail.’ Placing his hands palm to palm, he replied, ‘ My lord, a lovely and beautiful woman, having quarrelled with her husband, had sallied forth into the adjoining jungle, and was sitting under a tree in yonder road, weeping bitterly, and shouting with a loud voice, ‘ I won’t remain !’ I then went up to her and with the sweetest tones and language tried to comfort her. Having admonished and reasoned with her to the best of my ability, I succeeded in reconciling her to her husband and ~~made~~ made them friends once more. She has now promised me that for 60 years to come she will not go out of her husband’s house.’

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“The king had seen this [exhibition of] his wisdom, and devotedness, and of the bravery of his son. He [therefore] said, ‘ Sentinel, when you went to gather information about the woman, I kept following you, and [though unperceived] was also present all the time. All the conversation between you and your son, and the conduct of the woman, I, with my own eyes and ears saw and heard. Well now, although you formerly were poor and needy, distressed and abject—and now are only a sentinel in my service—please God, you shall henceforth experience continuous prosperity and promotion ; I shall bestow upon you favour upon favour, and, by the grace of God, you will in

time arrive at the very highest pinnacle of wealth and happiness.'

"Having thus spoken, the king retired for repose and went to sleep on a luxurious couch. After a few hours it was again dawn. The king [in due time] issued forth, and having taken his seat [on his throne] sent for¹ the sentinel. Then having assembled all his *wazīrs*, *amīrs*, and office-bearers, he thus addressed them: 'Attendants at the foot of the throne! I have, with the greatest pleasure, made this man my heir apparent, and, of my own free will, have given him all my wealth, and property, and treasury.'"

Just as the parrot had finished this tale the morning dawned and the sun arose. *Khøjistā's* departure was again deferred, for, from listening the whole night to the story of "the King of Tabristān and the sentinel," her head began to ache. As soon as she got to bed she fell asleep.

At last, by sleep o'erpowered, she went to bed,
And in its corner wrapped her face and head.²

¹ *Lit.*, "Remembered." But the phrase *yād karnā* means sometimes (as here) "to name, mention, call, or send for."

² *Lit.*, "At last, intoxicated [by the opiate] of sleep she went to lie down, covering her head and face in a corner of the bedstead."

TALE III.

A CARPENTER AND A GOLDSMITH, HAVING UNITEDLY STOLEN
SOME GOLDEN IMAGES FROM SOMEWHERE, AND CONCEALED
THEM IN A CERTAIN PLACE, FALL OUT WITH ONE ANOTHER.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon shone forth,
Khojista, clothed in a purple garb and with a yellow
shawl thrown over her, immersed [as it were] from
head to foot in a sea of jewels, again repaired to the
parrot to obtain his leave¹ [to go to her paramour],
and thus addressed him. "O parrot, make haste and
give me your permission¹ to-night that I may meet my
sweetheart and have some loving converse with him."
The parrot replied, "My lady, I gave you permission
the very first night. Why have you delayed till now?
Well, *now* go; but [first] take off those jewels from

¹ The original word *rukhsat* has the same diversity and ambiguity of
meaning as our own word "leave," viz., either "permission or dismissal—
license or farewell." So the phrase *rukhsat lenā* may mean either "to take
leave of," or "to get leave from."

your person, because, my lady, this world is a very wicked place; having decked yourself with valuables, to go [alone] to any man is not prudent. Perhaps these ornaments may attract his attention and excite his avarice, and then there will be an end both to you and to your jewels. Every atom of affection will vanish with every atom of ornament, in the same way as a breach took place in the friendship of the goldsmith and the carpenter; and, for the mere sake of gold, an attachment of years' [duration] was given up. Khojista asked, "What is that story? tell it me at length."

"In a certain city," said the parrot, "there was such a friendship between a carpenter and a goldsmith that any one who saw them together would say that they were certainly full brothers. It so happened that they both set out together on a journey. Having reached a certain city, they ran short of money. So one said to the other, 'There is, in a particular part of this city, an idol-temple in which there are several golden images. Let us go, and assuming the disguise of Brahmans, engage in devotion there. Having found a favourable opportunity, some time or other, let us steal two or three of the images, and having sold them, we can then live very comfortably.'¹

¹ *Lit.*, "Let us spend [our time] with enjoyment," or "according to our liking."

“ Having resolved so to do, they both repaired to the said temple and began there to worship. The Brahmans of the place, on seeing their excessive devotion, all became ashamed [of their own inferior piety] and every day one or two of the Brahmans would leave the temple, and not return again. If any one asked, ‘ Why have you forsaken that temple ? ’ They would reply, ‘ For some days past two Brahmans have come—such devout and humble worshippers¹ that for one moment they do not raise their heads from the contemplation of the Supreme Deity (Bhagwān), nor exchange looks² with any one. Therefore it is that we have come away, because we cannot come up to them in the performance of worship and austerities.’

“ When there remained no one in the temple but those two, they took the opportunity, at night, to steal several images, and made their way home with them. On arriving near the city they buried the images under a certain tree, and then each repaired to his own abode. After midnight, the goldsmith, going there alone, dug up the images and carried them off home with him. Then, in the morning, he went to the joiner, and thus addressed him. ‘ Carpenter, you perfidious liar, impostor, and rogue ! You have had no regard for our intimacy, and have made a breach in the friendship

¹ *Lit.*, “ incarnations of virtue and possessors of modesty.”

² Or “ glances.”

which has existed so long, by stealing those idols. By [the results of] this perfidy for how many years will you live, and for how many days will you procure your livelihood? Ah, well! there is now no confidence to be placed even in friendship, in this world.'

"The other, on hearing these words of his, wondered in his mind what the fellow was prating about. At last, being at his wits' end, he said, 'Well, goldsmith, what's done is done, and what has happened has happened—so let it pass. I know [all about it], but, for God's sake, don't fasten a calumny on me.' Inasmuch as he was a sensible man, and did not think it proper to contend and quarrel with him,—he remained silent.

"After a few days, the carpenter had completed a wooden figure—the very image of the goldsmith—and put upon it just such clothes as his. Then, having brought from somewhere, two bear's cubs, he put into the sleeves and skirt of the figure's dress different ~~articles~~ of food suitable for the cubs. Whenever they were hungry, they used to go up to the image, and whatever they found in its sleeves or skirt, that they would eat, and think in their minds, 'this is all that a father or mother could be to us;' and they gradually acquired such a familiarity with the figure, that, from fondness for it, they would every day go and sit on the skirt of its robe.

“When the cubs had formed an attachment and liking for the image, the carpenter invited the goldsmith, and the women of his household—and also the women of the neighbourhood—to an entertainment. Accordingly, the goldsmith’s wife came to his (the carpenter’s) house, bringing with her her two children. The carpenter remained on the alert¹, watching his opportunity. After two hours, finding the goldsmith and his wife off their guard, he secreted their two boys, and, releasing the bear’s cubs, set up a loud lamentation, saying, ‘Alas! Alas! how have the goldsmith’s boys become bear’s cubs!’ On hearing these words, the goldsmith came in from outside the house [where he happened to be] weeping uncontrollably, and seizing the carpenter by the waist, exclaimed, ‘You rascal! what falsehoods are you chattering? where in the world did human beings ever become brute beasts?’

“At last, the dispute came before the *Kāzī* [for settlement]. The judge asked, ‘How came it to pass, carpenter, that the man’s children were changed into bear’s cubs?’ The carpenter replied, ‘Please your worship, the two [boys] were playing together in my presence, and wrestling, when suddenly, falling on the ground, they became bear’s cubs! The *Kāzī* said, ‘How can I know that this statement is true?’ ‘My

lord!' said the carpenter, 'I have seen it written in a book that, once upon a time, a multitude of men were, by the anger of God, metamorphosed into beasts; but the intellects of the people remained just as before, and their love and affection just the same. The proper thing to do [in this case] would be, to send for the cubs at once, and in open court, in the presence of all, high and low, confront them with the man. Should they be really [as I say] his children, then they will exhibit a fondness for him. And if it should prove otherwise, then deal with me [as a perjured witness] as you may think proper.'

"This proposal of his met with the *Kāzī's* approval. So, sending for the cubs, he had them let loose before the goldsmith. On account of [his resemblance to] the figure, they became friends with him at once.

"In spite of the surrounding crowd, they rushed eagerly towards him, clang to him, and began to rub their snouts on his feet, and to thrust their heads into his armpits. The *Kāzī* then said, 'You rogue of a goldsmith! these are both your children—I am satisfied of it. Enough! come now, take them both up and carry them home. Why have you unjustly been guilty of such misconduct and picked a quarrel with this poor carpenter?'

“Then the goldsmith fell at the feet of the carpenter and began to entreat him, saying, ‘My friend, if you have done this trick for the purpose of getting your share [of the plunder] then take your share and give me back my children?’ He replied. ‘Goldsmith, you have committed a great offence, and been guilty of a breach of confidence. But if you will now leave off lying, and repent of your deceitful conduct, then, perhaps, your boys will re-assume their original form.’ Accordingly, the goldsmith gave him his proper share and received back his children.’”

The parrot having finished his story, said, “Khojista, take off your ornaments and go. Perhaps he, too, (your lover) may be equally untrustworthy, and may covet them, and then there will be an end both to your jewels and to his love.” The lady, on hearing this, was about to take off her ornaments and hasten to her lover; when, just then, the morning dawned and the cock crew. Her visit was therefore postponed for that night, also, and, repeating this couplet, she remained silent.

“A night, spent in weeping, has come to an end;
But not separation from thee, my loved friend!”

¹ *Lit.*, “[In] weeping and weeping the whole night has been passed:
But the affair (or subject) of thy separation is not [yet] ended.”

TALE IV.

A YOUNG NOBLEMAN TESTS THE HONOUR AND CHASTITY OF A
SOLDIER'S WIFE, AND IS PUT TO SHAME.

WHEN the sun had set, and the moon arose, *Khojista*,—having thrown round her neck a suit of light green, and bedecked herself with every [sort of] jewel; and having besmeared her lips with the red juice of betels, surrounded by a line of *missī*,¹ with her hair well oiled and combed, and her sleeves fastened up—eagerly arose [from her couch] with an air of coquetry, and repaired to the parrot once more to get her *congé* from him,—and thus addressed him. “O parrot! you continually detain me with your talk, and so fascinate me with [a parcel of] lying [tales]. It is a matter of no concern to you to hear of me, that I am dying with the pangs of love; and this stanza is just suited to my case :

¹ The *missī* is a powder (made from vitriol, &c.) with which Indian females often dye their teeth black (strange notion of beauty!) in applying which, their ruby lips would unavoidably be edged with a black line. More commonly their teeth are dyed red from eating *pān*, or betel nut.

Will you ever, I wonder, accomplish your plight?
 This sad wrangling, I fear, will soon kill me outright.
 Put an end to it, then—if my life you hold dear—
 Both morning and eve: my heart's wish you now hear.¹

"I can no longer endure the pains of expectation. I adjure you, therefore by God, that you give me leave to-night to go and embrace him." The parrot replied, "Khojista, I, too, am ashamed of this affair: my bosom is rent and my heart burns because every night you keep listening to my talk and do not go to your lover. If, meanwhile—which God forbid—your husband should suddenly arrive, you will fall into disgrace on account of your beloved one, just as the young nobleman was put to shame by the soldier's wife. Khojista asked, "How runs the story about him? Tell it me." The parrot thus began:—

"In a certain city there was a soldier, who had a very beautiful wife, over whose chastity he used to keep constant watch, and would never quit her for a moment.

"In course of time,² it so happened that this soldier

¹ *Lit.*, "I wonder what thy promises and messages will do (*i.e.*, result in). In the midst of this wrangling, my work is completed (*i.e.*, it will be all up with me). If my life be dear [to thee], then put an end [to the wrangling] morning and evening. This is the purport of my speech (or, my object)."

² *Lit.*, "In the revolution of the sky."

was reduced to great poverty. Then his wife asked him why he had given up his worldly profession, in consequence of which things had arrived at this plight. He replied, 'I have no confidence in you, madam, hence it is that my affairs have become involved, and I am reduced to such distress, for I can neither go anywhere nor enter into anyone's service.' Thereupon she replied, 'Oh, Sir! banish such evil thoughts from your mind, for no man can seduce a virtuous woman; and a vicious woman no husband can restrain from falling. Perhaps you have not heard the story of the *Jogī*¹ who, having assumed the form of an elephant, made his wife mount upon his back, and used to wander about from forest to forest. And yet this shameless woman, upon his very back, had intercourse with a hundred and one men.' The soldier asked her to tell him the story. 'A certain way-farer,' said his wife, 'once saw in a desert a wild elephant going along with a litter on its back. For fear of it he climbed up into a tree. It so happened that the elephant came beneath that very tree, and, having put down the *haudā* (litter) from off its back on that spot,

¹ *i.e.* A *jogī* (or *yogī*) is a Hindū ascetic or religious mendicant. A *faḳīr* (or "faqueer," as commonly spelt) is properly a Mohammedan begging monk. But the two words are often interchanged and applied indiscriminately to one and the same individual. Through the efficacy of long and severe penances (*yog*) some *yogīs* were supposed to have the power of assuming various forms of body and working other miracles: though, of course, such delusions are very rarely entertained, in the present more enlightened days, even by the most superstitious Hindoos.

went away to graze. The man then observed that in the litter there was a lovely and handsome woman. So, having descended from the tree, he went up to her and engaged in conversation and amorous dalliance with her. She, too, being pleased with the man began to express her [lustful] desires by inuendos and blandishments, and became as intimate with him as if she had always known him. * * * *

When all was over, the woman drew from her pocket a knotted cord, and made one more knot in the string. Upon this, the man asked her about it, saying, 'Tell me truly, by God, what is the meaning of this string and of these knots, and explain to me also why you have made the additional knot.' That depraved woman thereupon replied, 'My husband is a sorcerer: for the sake of insuring my chastity he assumes the form of an elephant, and, having mounted me on his back, wanders about from forest to forest. Notwithstanding this precaution on his part, I have had intercourse with one hundred men, and, as a memorandum, I have made a knot for each. To-day, through your kind favour, the sum total of knots is one hundred and one.'

"When she had finished this story, her husband said, 'Well, now, what are your commands concerning me? I will do whatever you tell me.' His wife rejoined, 'The best advice I can give you is this; that

you set out on a journey [to some distant part of the country] and enter into some one's service. I will give you a nosegay of fresh and blooming flowers. As long as that nosegay does not fade, you will know that your wife has maintained her honour and chastity: but if—which God forbid—the flowers should wither, then conclude that she has been guilty of some misconduct.'

"This speech of his wife's pleased the soldier. He then, reluctantly, parted from her and set out for a certain [distant] country in search of a livelihood: but before bidding her adieu, the woman gave him a nosegay according to her promise. At last, he arrived in a particular city, and became servant to a certain young nobleman. The nosegay he kept by him carefully night and day,¹ and was continually looking at it.

"Meanwhile, the season of autumn arrived in the flower-garden of the world, and every flower and bud took its departure from the mundane flower-bed, so that, in all the world, neither name nor vestige of rose or [other] flower remained—except that nosegay which the soldier had. Then the young nobleman remarked to his attendant, 'If one were to expend a *lākh* of rupees² he could not obtain a single [fresh] flower to-

¹ *Id.*, "all 8 watches."

² 100,000 rupees = £10,000.

day, nor is one to be met with in the hands of any king or vizīr. It is a wonder [to me] then where that poor indigent soldier always procures a fresh and blooming nosegay.'

" 'Please your highness,' said the attendants, respectfully, 'it is equally a wonder to us, too.' Then the amīr, questioning [the man himself] said, 'Soldier, what sort of nosegay is this, and where did you get it?' He replied, 'My wife gave it me as a token of her chastity—telling me that as long as it remained fresh and blooming I should know for certain that the robe¹ of her honour was undefiled by sin.' At this the amīr laughed, and said, 'Soldier, your wife is a sorceress and impostor—she is deceiving you.' He then told [privately] one of his two cooks, to go to the soldier's town, and having—by any trick or stratagem he could devise—had [criminal] intercourse with his (the sepoy's) wife, to return quickly and inform him all how and about it, 'and then let us see,' [added he] 'whether the nosegay withers or not—well, let that, too, be ascertained.'

"The cook, in accordance with his master's orders, went to the town where she lived; and then sent to her an old bawd, after giving her various instructions [as to what to say and do], and having explained matters

¹ *Lit.*, "skirt."

to her, that old hag accordingly went to the woman's house and told her all that he had bid her say, and a good deal, too, out of her own head. But the soldier's wife, having heard her, made no reply to the bawd, except, merely, 'Bring the man to me, and let me see if he suits my fancy or not.' Afterwards, the old woman introduced the said individual to the [sepoy's] wife. Thereupon, that virtuous dame, stooping down, said in the ear of the man, 'Very good, I am all ready—but, for the present, you go and say to that woman that you won't have an amour with me, because I don't take your fancy. Then, after the first watch of the night,¹ come alone, without fear, to my house—and whatever you shall ask me to do I will assent to. But don't inform *her* about it, for it is not well to tell a secret to that class of people.'

"The man approved of her proposition, and, in accordance with what she had told him, he said to the bawd, 'I won't have any intimacy with that woman, for she does not suit my fancy.' Then, after midnight, he came to the woman's door and knocked. She had, meanwhile, placed over a blind (*i.e.* waterless) well, belonging to the house, a *chārpāī* (small wooden bedstead) the bottom of which was made of raw thread, and having spread over it a sheet, she told the man, on his entering, to sit down on it. 'This he gladly

¹ *i.e.*, about 9 P.M.

did : but, immediately on doing so, he fell down inside the well, and began to hollo out. 'The soldier's wife then said to him, ' You fellow ! tell me truly who you are, and who sent you, and where you came from. If you tell me the truth, then I will let you off alive, but if not, then I will put an end to your life in this very well.' Upon this, being utterly helpless, he narrated at full length all about the young nobleman and her husband—but still he could not [as yet] get out of his plight, but remained shut up for a time in the well.

"Meanwhile, the young nobleman, seeing that he did not return, said to the other cook, ' You, too, taking with you a quantity of merchandize, go to that town, and, having formed an intimacy with the woman, quickly return. But take care not to act in such a way as that you also should take up your abode there.¹ Thereupon he, likewise, went into that part of the country, and, taking with him a procuress, proceeded to the soldier's house. But he also got imprisoned in the well, in the same way as his predecessor.

"Then the nobleman thought to himself, that perhaps some dire calamity had befallen him that he had not returned. So, being almost at his wits' end, he made a pretext of going on a hunting expedition, and

¹ *Lit.*, "becoming [an inhabitant] of that place should remain."

set out for that country ; and the said soldier accompanied him along with his military escort. After some days, having arrived near the town, he halted in a certain garden ; when the soldier, going on to his own house, placed before his [faithful and delighted] wife the unfaded nosegay. She then recounted to her husband, in minute detail, all that had befallen her during his absence. After two days the soldier brought his master to the house, and made an entertainment. Having taken the two cooks out of the well, he dressed them up as slave-girls, and said to them, ‘Some guests have come to my house to-day. If you, having prepared some nice savoury food, will place it before them, and wait upon them, then to-morrow I will set you at liberty.’

“The two men, thus attired, brought in the food and placed it before the young nobleman. From the grief they had endured in the well, and from eating bad food, the hair of their heads and their beards and moustaches had fallen off, and the complexion of their faces had also changed ; so that the young *amīr* did not at once recognize them : he therefore asked the soldier what such grievous offence these maid servants had been guilty of, that he had had their heads shaven and made them such figures.¹” The soldier replied, ‘They have committed a great crime—but what can I

¹ *Lit.*, “brought them into this state.”

say? Ask them yourself—they will themselves tell their own story.’ At last the young *amīr*, on looking attentively at them, recognised them as his own cooks : and they, too, him as their master. Then they ran and fell at his feet, and burst into a flood of tears ; and [as soon as they could speak] bore united testimony to the chastity of the soldier’s wife.

“ Thereupon, that good dame, speaking from behind a curtain, thus addressed their master. ‘ Young *amīr* ! I am the woman whom you asserted to be a sorceress, and whose husband you made a fool of and laughed at, and then sent men for the purpose of putting me to the test. Now you see what sort of a woman I am, and how, by the grace of God, my chastity remains [unsullied].’ Then, [on hearing these words,] the young *amīr* was quite ashamed of himself, and began to make apologies [for his conduct] and beg her pardon.”

When the parrot had finished this tale, he said, “ *Khojista* ! now quickly go and have a meeting with your beloved. But God forbid that, meanwhile, your husband should suddenly arrive, and then, justly or not, you would—in the very presence of your lover—be proved to be a promise-breaker and a liar, and be put to shame, just as the young nobleman was put to confusion before the soldier’s wife.” His mistress,

on hearing this, was on the point of repairing to her admirer, when it dawned, and the cock crew. Her visit was therefore again deferred, and she repeated this couplet, [as expressive of her feelings.]

“ As time rolls on, from year to year,
There's nought that *may* not be :
But one thing never *will*, I fear¹—
My meeting, love, with thee.² ”

¹ Or, “ One thing alone seems *never* near—”

² *Lit.*, “ By the revolution of the heavens, everything is near (or possible) : one thing is distant (or impossible) [viz., for it] to bring about my union with thee.”

TALE V.

A CARPENTER, A GOLDSMITH, A TAILOR AND A RECLUSE QUARREL.
WITH ONE ANOTHER ABOUT A WOODEN IMAGE, AND ARE ALL
PUT TO SHAME.

WHEN the sun set and the moon made its appearance, Khojista repaired to the parrot to ask his leave and said, "I adjure thee, O parrot, by thy Creator, quickly to give me permission that I may go to my sweetheart, and, having opened up my mind to him, may enjoy the pleasures appropriate to youth." The parrot replied, "My lady, every night I grant you leave; it is you, yourself, who delay and will not go. nay, I am constantly¹ fearing lest somehow your husband should suddenly make his appearance, and then your condition would be just like that of those four men." Khojista asked, "What is the story about the four men? Tell it me." The parrot thus commenced:

¹ *Lit.*, "all 8 watches."

“Once upon a time, a carpenter, a goldsmith, a tailor and a hermit unitedly set out for a certain city to earn something of a livelihood. It so happened, one day, that, evening coming on, they, in the absence of an inn, bivouacked in a certain forest, and said to one another, ‘Let us remain to-night in this wood and keep watch—for in the wilderness there is danger of everything. The best plan will be for us four men to keep awake and guard one watch each; then, at morning dawn, we will, by the grace of God, reach our intended halting place safe and sound.’

“This proposition was approved of by all, and the first watch falling to the lot of the carpenter, all the others went to sleep. After one *ghari* (24 minutes) the carpenter, for the sake of keeping himself awake, took his axe, and having cut off a thick branch of a tree, fashioned it, by his handicraft, into the perfect image of an exceedingly beautiful woman.

“At the end of his watch he awoke the tailor, and he himself went to sleep. The tailor, likewise, thought of something to keep himself from drowsiness, by means of which he might continue awake throughout his watch. Meanwhile, his eyes fell on that image right before him, upon which he said to himself, ‘the carpenter, in order to exhibit his skill, has formed this image; well, let me, too, sew such clothes and fit them

upon it, that it may become twice as lovely. Finally, he, also, by *his* professional skill, made, in the course of his watch a most elegant suit of apparel, as if for a bride,¹ and clothed the figure therewith. Having done which, he aroused the goldsmith, and himself went to sleep.

“Then the goldsmith began to look out for some means of keeping awake, when the said image in full dress was observed by him at a little distance. Then he said to himself, these two have each exhibited their respective handicrafts—it is only right that I, too, should show my artistic skill. Let me adorn this image with a set of ornaments of a new fashion, that they, too, may know how clever I am.² Having thus determined, he formed and put upon the figure such a set of jewellery, that it became still more beautiful—the probability is that no one to this day ever beheld ornaments of such a fashion. After that, the appearance of the figure was such as to surpass all description :—one thing only remained, viz., to impart life to it. The goldsmith, then, in his turn, awoke the hermit, and himself went to sleep.

“The devotee immediately on rising performed his ablutions, and then engaged in divine worship. After

¹ *Lit.*, “like that of brides.”

² *Lit.*, “that it” (*i.e.*, my skill) “is such.”

thè lapse of one *gharī*, what does he see? A lovely woman standing before him! but she neither moves nor budges! Then he concluded that 'this is the result of the workmanship of these three men. Now it devolves upon me to exhibit my peculiar power.¹ By the grace and mercy of God, I will show it to be such that, through prayer, I will make this lifeless thing to have life, so that they, too, may remember what sort of beings devout worshippers are.'² Finally, the hermit, after prayer to³ the All Merciful One, burst into a flood of tears, and offered these petitions.⁴ 'O Creator of earth and heaven, for the sake of Thy divinity, impart life to this wooden image, and the gift of speech, so that I, too, may obtain honour among my friends.' At last, these supplications found acceptance in the Divine presence. That very hour life entered into the image, and she began to speak after the manner of men.

"When night was at an end, and the sun arose, all four men, seeing the [live] figure, became enamoured with her, and began to quarrel with one another. The carpenter said, 'I am her master, inasmuch as, having cut this piece of wood into the image of a human being, I *made* her—so I shall take her.' The tailor

¹ *Lit.*, "perfection" or "skill."

² *Lit.*, "That worshippers are such."

³ *Lit.*, "in presence of."

⁴ *Lit.*, "weeping unrestrainedly,—began to ask blessings (or, requests.)"

said, 'I am her owner, because I gave the naked creature the sense of shame and put clothes on her.' The goldsmith said, 'This bride is my property, because I formed such a set of ornaments and put them on her, that she became just like a bride.' And the hermit said, 'This was just a wooden figure, but through my prayers, the Almighty gave it life. Who has the face to cast eyes on her besides me? I shall take her.'

"Well, the altercation increased [in violence]. Meanwhile, a stranger arrived on the spot, and to him all four referred the case for decision. But he, too, as soon as he saw the image, fell in love with it, and forthwith said, 'This is my wedded wife: you, by using deceit have seduced her from my house and separated her from me.' At last, the stranger took all four before the police magistrate. The *Kotwāl*, too, having seen her became enamoured, and proceeded to say, 'This is my brother's wife; he went on a journey, taking her with him. Probably you have murdered him and ran off with her.'

"Finally, the *Kotwāl* brought them all before the *Kāzi*. He, likewise, was smitten with her, and said, 'Who are you? This is my slave. I have been searching for her for some time past. She ran off, taking with her a quantity of goods, jewels, and cash.'

At last, by your means, I have found her again. Now where is the property? Tell me that too.'

"In short, the dispute was carried to such a length that all the men and women of the city assembled together to see the fracas.¹ Then one of the spectators—an old man—said: 'This quarrel of yours will never be decided *here*, till the resurrection, by anyone. You all go to such and such a city, several days journey from this. There stands there a very large old tree. It is called *shajarat-ul-hukm* ('the tree of decision'). Whoever cannot get his cause decided, goes to that tree, and out of it there comes forth a voice which declares what is false and what is true, and each one gets his due.' In fine, all the seven men, on hearing this advice, repaired to the said tree, taking the woman with them, and all of them, having each stated his own case properly, appealed to the tree to decide to which of them the woman rightfully belonged. Upon this, the trunk of the tree burst asunder, and the woman, running up to it, became amalgamated with it. Then from the tree there issued forth a voice to this effect. 'You will have probably heard that everything returns to its original element. Be off with you! take an airing and cool yourselves down, and each of you make his way home.'²

¹ *Lit.*, "sight," or "fun."

² *Lit.*, "eat the wind and coolly, coolly each go home."

“The end of the story is, that all seven being thus put to shame, went off each to his own house.”

The parrot having now finished his tale, said, “Khojista, if thy husband should come and put thee in confinement, then thou, too, wouldst be put to shame on account of thy beloved. Thou hadst better be off quickly and embrace thy lover.” Khojista, on hearing this, was anxious to set out, but just then it dawned and the cock crew. Her going, that day, too, remained in *statu quo*.¹ Then she repeated this couplet and wept bitterly.

“ Ere dawn of morn, my soul did not depart—
Nor yet, alas ! the anguish of my heart.² ”

¹ *Lit.*, “just so,” *i.e.*, “as before”—a thing of the future, deferred.

² *Lit.*, “Before the dawn, my life has not gone.” (Would that it had !)
“Alas ! this chagrin has not gone from my heart.”

TALE VI.

ABOUT THE KING OF KINNAUJ AND HIS DAUGHTER—AND A FAKIR
FALLING IN LOVE WITH HER.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista having changed her dress and put on her ornaments, attired in the extreme of fashion, repaired once more to the parrot to ask his leave. "Parrot," said she, "I am ashamed [of my conduct] towards you, for every night I keep coming to ask your leave and bothering you, and so, for my sake, you are deprived of rest and sleep. I am bowed down under the weight of my obligations to you,¹ the greatness of which I cannot express.

‘ Were every hair upon my pate,
A tongue to speak thy praises made,
E’en then, in language adequate,
Thy kindness could not be portrayed.’”¹

¹ *Lit.*, "I cannot lift up my neck from that kindness of thine."

² *Lit.*, "If every root of my hair were a tongue, the expression of thy kindness could not be."

The parrot replied, "Khojista! what is this you are saying? I am only one of the purchased slaves of your husband; when can I ever execute any business of yours in such conformity with my servile obligations that you should feel induced to address me so courteously?¹ Nay, on the contrary, I am ashamed of myself—however, I am ready to run all risks on your behalf, and it is probable I shall yet succeed in securing you the desired meeting with your lover.

‘ My latest breath I’d gladly spend,

If so thou mightst embrace thy friend.’²

And like Rāe Rāyān (whose story you will doubtless have heard) I will further your love affairs to my utmost ability.” Khojista asked, “what is the story about him? Tell it me.” The parrot proceeded to do so, saying,

“A certain king of Kinnauj³ had a very lovely daughter. It so happened that a fakīr (or religious mendicant) fell in love with her, and his passion was so intense as to drive him mad. When he recovered his senses, he said to himself,—‘what sheer folly is

¹ *Lit.*, “that you do this amount of kindness.”

² *Lit.*, “I will lose [everything] up to my life itself: but I will get thee to meet with thy lover.”

³ Kinnauj, or Kannauj (commonly spelt by Europeans Kanouj, or Canouge)—a corruption of the Sanskrit Kanyakubja—is a very ancient and celebrated city in Upper India, (about 50 miles west from Lucknow) and formerly the capital of a powerful kingdom.

this ? What connection can there ever be between a humble individual [like you] and one so exalted ? You are an indigent darvesh, or fakīr, and he a Rājā : how could his daughter ever give her hand to you ? ' However, his passion allowing him no rest, he some time after sent this message to the king. ' Give me your daughter in marriage, for I am in love with her ; —consider not my beggarhood and your own royalty.'

"The king, on hearing this message of the fakīr, became enraged, and called out, ' Who's there ? here ! go and punish that fakīr.' His diwān (minister of state), placing his hands palm to palm (in token of respect), thus addressed him. ' It ill befits a ruler to insult or distress a poor fakīr. I will, by a stratagem, get him sent out of the city in order that he may be afterwards killed, and your majesty escape the infamy [of causing his death].' Afterwards, the diwān sent for the fakīr, and said to him, ' If you will bring an elephant laden with gold, then, rest assured, you will obtain the object of your affection.' The darvesh was delighted at hearing this, and forthwith began to consider how he could get the gold. Meanwhile, some one said to him, ' Beggar, if you will make your way to Rāe Rāyān you will get, according to your desire, whatever you may ask. The fakīr immediately repaired to Rāe Rāyān and made this request. ' Good day,

Rāe bābā!¹ let me have² an elephant, laden with ashrafīs.³

“As soon as Rāy Rāyān heard the darvesh’s voice, he immediately gave him an elephant laden with gold. The fakīr thereupon took it away to the king, and said, ‘Mahārāj! please take this elephant with its load of gold, and give me your daughter in marriage.’ The Rājā then said to his diwān, ‘This stratagem of yours has not succeeded—for he has brought an elephant loaded with gold. Now what’s to be done?’ He replied, ‘No doubt the fakīr has gone to Rāe Rāyān and asked *him* for the elephant and gold, for there is no other such person now in the world [from whom he could have got them]. Then, having thought for a moment, he said to the darvesh, ‘Fakīr, the Rājā’s daughter is not to be obtained in exchange for such an elephant. But, if you *must* get her, then go at once and cut off Rāe Rāyān’s head and bring it here; and you may *then* take the young princess with you wherever you like.’

¹ *Lit.*, “Health and welfare to Rāe bābā.” “*Bābā*” is an expression of endearment, and may be translated either by “father,” or “my son,” or “good sir,” &c. Rāe Rāyān means, “Prince (or chief) of princes.” The title is given to the head officer of Exchequer, but here we regard it as a proper name.

² *Lit.*, “let this fakīr obtain.”

³ The Ashrafi is a gold coin, varying in value at different times and places. That of Calcutta is worth £1 11s. 8d., and the gold it is made of is better than the English standard gold by 5 shillings in the ounce, or about one-sixteenth.

Well, the Fakīr, upon this, returned to Rāe Rāyān, and said, 'Hātim¹ Bābā, *now* I may obtain the desire of my heart in exchange for your head. If you will give me your head then this fakīr will attain to the object of his heart's ambition.' Rāe Rāyān replied, 'Keep your mind at ease, fakīr. The Lord (God) created this head of mine for the very purpose of its being made of use to somebody; for a long while past I have held this head in my hand, that I might give it to whoever should ask it. Now that you have requested it—here it is; and I, too, am ready [to accompany it]. Having tied a rope round my neck, conduct me to the king, and say to him, 'The head which you asked for I have brought—along with its body.' Should he not so accept of it, then cut it off from my body; and should he ask for anything else, that, too, I will produce.'

"In fine, the darvesh, having fastened a rope round Rāe Rāyān's neck, took him to the king. He, on seeing the noble generosity of the man (Rāe Rāyān) rose from his seat and threw himself at his feet, saying, 'True it is, so heroic a man there is not in this world, as you—and never will be—who would give his head for the sake of a poor fakīr.' Having so said, he sent

¹ Hātim, surnamed Tāyī, from the tribe to which he belonged, was an Arab chieftain, celebrated for his liberality. Rāe Rāyān is here so addressed as a personification of Hātim: or it may be translated "generous."

for his daughter, and presenting her to Rāe Rāyān, said, ‘Mahārāj—she is your slave, give her to whomsoever you please.’ ”

The parrot having finished his story, said to Kho-jista, “My lady! I, too, would willingly have my head cut off to serve you, and to fulfil the desire of your heart. In that respect I shall never be found wanting [in devotedness]. You had better now go quickly to your beloved, and enjoy the pleasures of life.’ Kho-jista, on hearing this, was about to go—when, just then, the day dawned and the cock crew. Her visit was again deferred, that day, too. She then burst into tears, and repeated this couplet—

“Explain, O dawn, thine enmity!

When will the night of meeting be?”¹

¹ *Sit.*, “O dawn, tell me truly thine enmity! wilt thou ever let me see the night of meeting?”

TALE VII.

THE FOWLER, THE PARROT, AND HER YOUNG ONES.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, moved to tears by the pangs of love, again repaired to the parrot to ask his leave, and seeing him in a thoughtful mood, she said, "O wise one! why are you sorrowful?" The parrot replied, "My lady, I am overwhelmed with anxiety on your account, and my perplexity keeps me from either eating or drinking.¹ I am constantly thinking how I may discover whether this lover of yours will prove faithful to you, or whether he may not be guilty of treachery and deceit, like the parrot of King Kāmrū Shāh." Khojista asked, "What is the story about him? Tell it me."

The parrot then commenced. "Once upon a time a fowler spread a net near the nest of a parrot, and

¹ *Lit.*, "has caused me to relinquish grain and water."

caught it therein, along with all its young ones. The parrot then said to her little ones, 'My children, the best thing that can be done in this plight, is for you to lie here quite still, pretending to be dead. If this bird-catcher shall think you dead, he will leave you behind, and if I alone should be caught, then never mind. Should I remain alive, then by one device or other, I will manage to return to you again.' The young ones acted according to her advice—each continuing to lie still without drawing a breath.

"The fowler, conceiving that they were probably dead, said, 'let me release them from the snare!' He accordingly threw them out of the net, whereupon they each flew away and perched upon the branch of a tree. The birdcatcher was then enraged with the mother-parrot, and was about to dash her violently on the ground, but, just then, she exclaimed, 'O fowler, do not kill me! If you spare my life I will be the means of procuring you such a sum of money, that you will want for nothing all the rest of your life. As long as you shall live you will have no anxiety about anything; for I am exceedingly sagacious and skilled in medicine. My knowledge of the medical science is as complete as anyone could desire.'

"The fowler was pleased at this appeal of hers, and

¹ *Lit.*, "I know the practice of physic as one might wish."

refrained from putting her to death. Then, addressing the bird, he said, 'Parrot, the king of my country, Kāmrū Shāh, has been ill for a long time past—having a severe and obstinate disease. Do you think you could cure him?' She replied, 'What's to hinder me?'¹ I am such a physician that the thousand diseased persons whom Aristotle and Luḳmān dismissed [as incurable] I could restore to health.² You take me to your king and recount the praises of my healing skill—then you can sell me to him for as much as you like.'

"Accordingly, the fowler, having shut up the parrot in a cage, took her to his king, and said, 'Your majesty, this parrot is exceedingly sagacious, and possesses great skill in the science of medicine. If you give me the command, I will bring her into the presence of your illustrious majesty.' Kāmrū Shāh replied, 'My friend, this is just what I was anxious for: I am in great need of a wise physician, and I was just wishing that some one would come who could remove my distemper. You had better bring

¹ *Lit.*, "What great work is this?"

² Referring to an Arabian tradition. Her medical skill excelled that of either the Greek or the Arabian sages named. Luḳmān is more celebrated for his numerous Fables, which are mostly identical with those of Æsop—whom some suppose to have been the same person as Luḳmān (or "Lockman"); but the latter is generally said to have been an emancipated Ethiopian slave. One Chapter of the Kurān is named after him.

the bird, and name her price.' He fixed her price at ten thousand *ashrafis*,¹ and the king ordered that sum to be given him. He took the money and went home. The parrot began to administer medicine to the king, and after two or three days the king's disease was half cured thereby.

"Then the parrot said, 'Your majesty, by the grace of God, and through my wisdom and medicines, you have now *half* recovered your health. If you will have compassion on me and grant me my liberty, then, I promise you, that I will bring from the desert such an article that, in two or three days after eating it, you will be *entirely* cured, and may take the bath of convalescence.' Kāmṛū Shāh thought that no doubt the parrot was speaking the truth, and, with this conviction, liberated her from the cage. The parrot thereupon flew off towards her own forest and never showed her face again to the king."

The parrot, having finished this tale, said, "Kho-jista, I am just afraid lest it should anyhow happen that that sweetheart of yours should be guilty of the like treachery with that of the parrot in the tale. For God's sake, be off quickly! and have a meeting with your beloved. But do you, on your part, never trust

¹ See note 3, p. 60.

² *Lit.*, "turned her face again in this direction."

him until you have well tested him." His mistress, on hearing this, was just about to set out, when it dawned and the cock crew. Her visit was therefore deferred for that day, too. She burst into tears, and repeated these lines :

"To-day my moon-faced love I'd seen,
Had Fortune not so cruel been."¹

¹ *Lit.*, "To-day I should have met with my moon-faced [lover], if Fate had not done this unkindness."

TALE VIII.

THE MERCHANT'S WIFE WHO DECEIVED HER HUSBAND AND
GAINED HER OBJECT.¹

WHEN the sun was lost to sight, and the moon appeared, Khojista, weeping and sighing disconsolately,² went again to the parrot to obtain his leave. He, perceiving her thus troubled in mind, asked, "My mistress, why are you so disconcerted? [I hope all] is well with you? Do not grieve so, lady; be not so distressed. God will smooth the path for you."³ Khojista replied, "My confidential friend, I constantly come to you and recount to you my every source of uneasiness. When is the time that you will give me leave, when is the time that I shall meet with my

¹ Or "got the better of him;" or, perhaps, "kept her secret." *Lit.*, "kept her word."

² *Lit.*, "heaving cold sighs."

³ *Lit.*, "will make (things) easy."

beloved? If you will only give me permission to-night, I will then go. But, if not, I will patiently remain at home." The parrot rejoined, "My mistress, you come to me every night, and listen to my prattle. Just when you are about to go, the morning arrives, and puts an end to night. I am anxious that, to-night, you should go quickly; so I shall only tell you a very short story, by means of which you may secure your object and meet with no calamity. Remember this, that if you should go anywhere and your husband should see you there, you must—like the merchant's wife—make a great outcry and uproar, so that he may be put to shame and you carry your point."¹

Khojista asked, "What is the story about ~~her~~? Relate it to me."

The parrot, therefore, commenced as follows:

"In a certain city there was an exceedingly rich merchant who had a very beautiful wife. The merchant, on one occasion, set out for a distant country for the purpose of traffic; and after he was gone, his wife took to immoral courses. After some months her husband returned to his native city, bringing with him lots of goods and wealth, and put up at a certain

¹ Or, "your [love] affair remain [undiscovered]." *Lit.*, "thy word (or matter) may remain."

inn. After midnight, having sent for a procuress, he said to her, 'I cannot go home to-day; if you will bring me a good-looking woman, I will reward you for it and make you very happy.' Hearing this, the old woman went, and began to look out for a courtesan. Well, after much vain searching in this direction and that, she was at her wits' end. Unable to find one [of the kind] anywhere, it so happened that the bawd at last went to the house of the merchant himself, and, addressing his wife, she said, 'A very rich merchant has arrived to-day from a foreign country—and a handsome man he is, too. He has sent me to get him a woman;—if you like, *you* go.' Well, she accordingly accompanied the bawd and went to the merchant. As soon as she saw the form of her husband, she at once recognised him, and said to herself, 'Hallo! dear me! this is my own husband! *now* what shall I do?' Finally, she raised a loud outcry, and called out, 'Run, neighbours, and see me righted! For six years my husband has been gone on a trading tour,¹ and I, day and night, have been looking for his return. Now that he has come back [what does he do? but] put up at this inn, and never come near me. To-day, having heard of his arrival, I have come here to him myself. If you will do me justice in this matter, it is well; but, otherwise, I will make a complaint before the Kāzī,

¹ *Lit.*, "had gone for trade."

and get rid of¹ the man.' Thereupon, the people of the neighbourhood congregated together, and she then said to them, 'I am this man's wife, and he is my husband: leaving me in this city alone he went a-travelling. Night and day² have I remained grieving over this. When, at last, by the grace of God, my fine gentleman had returned to-day safe and sound, he did not go home—but, forgetting me, his chaste and virtuous wife, is wanting to enjoy himself with a parcel of strange 'unfortunates.' Having got word of this, I have come myself to him. You, who have the fear of God in you, judge between us!'

"Finally, after every one had said something in the way of rebuking and admonishing the merchant, they succeeded in reconciling him with his wife—no one even suspecting that she herself had come for the purpose of getting the wages of sin. Well, now, see how that woman, by means of her volubility, retained her character entirely unsullied—and brought her husband home."

Having finished his story, the parrot said to Khojista, "Rise now, and run to your beloved,—delay not another moment!" Hearing this, she was about to go, when it dawned and the cock crew. Her visit

¹ *Lit.*, "abandon."

² *Lit.*, "all 8 watches."

was deferred for that day, too. Then, covering her face and bursting into tears, she repeated these lines :

“ The gladsome night of meeting, say,
How will it be secured by me ?
Each morning chases it away :—
Such is my tiresome destiny !”¹

¹ *Lit.*, “ How may the night of meeting with my sweetheart be obtained ?
Every morning persecutes me. Such is my change of fortune.”

TALE IX.

THE VILLAGER'S WIFE WHO HAD AN AMOUR WITH ANOTHER MAN.

WHEN the sun had set and the stars made their appearance, Khojista, weeping and lamenting uncontrollably, repaired to the parrot to take leave of him, and thus addressed him. "My bosom friend! to-day, again, my heart is in a state of wretchedness on account of separation from him: if you think fit, then quickly give me leave to go to him, otherwise I will sit still patiently, although I well know, that a lover has nothing to do with patience.¹ I have an irresistible desire to get to him some way or other, and having given him a fond embrace, to enjoy with him the rapturous delights of youthful passion.

"O when shall I see thee, adored one—my *own*!

My eyes have with weeping quite lustréless grown.

1000. "I am aware that whoever is in love—what business has he (or with patience?"

I muse on the past—for thy coming I long :
 Thy name, while I breathe, shall still dwell on my tongue.”¹

The parrot said, “Khojista, I did not think that your love for him would reduce you to such a state of distraction, and grief for separation from him bring you to this.

“I little imagined thy love was so great ;
 And dread the results of thy heart-broken state.”²

But, by the grace of God³ (should the Almighty so will it) you will *now* have a meeting with your friend—although you keep coming to me every night to get my leave, and then, through listening to my talk, let the hoped-for night slip away. However, wise men have said, ‘Whoever acts with due deliberation will never be put to shame (or have cause to repent), but, on the contrary, will always remain happy’—just as [was the case with] the villager’s wife, who used deliberation on the occasion on which she misconducted herself, and [consequently] did not repent of what she had done.’

¹ *Lit.*, “When shall I see thee, O Gosāin ! my eyes are becoming white. My heart is in remembrance [of thee]. My eyes are looking towards [thy road-end] (i.e., arrival). My breath is in my nostrils ; on my tongue is ‘Sāin, Sāin.’” “*Sāin*,” or “*Gosāin*,” means either “the Deity,” “Lord,” or “a Saint :” “an object of reverence and adoration.”

² *Lit.*, “I did not understand this to be the mode of thy love. From thy grief terror begins to come to my heart.”

³ *Lit.*, “[If] the grace of God please.”

Khojista asked him to tell her the story, and so the parrot proceeded to do so, as follows :

“ One day a villager’s wife was sitting beside her cottage, when a young man saw her and fell in love with her. The woman was aware that he was smitten with her, and, having called him to her, gratified his amorous desires. Afterwards, she again sent for him by private signal, and, when he arrived, said to him, ‘ After midnight come and seat yourself under that tree there ; and then I will join you when I have got my husband sound asleep.’ Having so said, she dismissed him—and thereupon busied herself with household duties. When midnight had arrived, the young man came to her house and took his seat under the said tree. And the woman, leaving her husband asleep, went and passed the night with her lover.

“ It so happened that her father-in-law meanwhile got up, for some purpose or other, and went out. To his surprise, he saw his son’s wife sleeping with another man. Being exceedingly grieved at this misconduct, he slipped off her anklets and took them away with him—saying to himself, ‘ In the morning I will well punish this miscreant.’ An hour after, the woman, on opening her eyes, sees to her dismay that her anklets are not on her legs. She cleverly concluded that, no doubt, her father-in-law had come and, seeing the

state of affairs, had made off with the ankle ornaments—and ‘in the morning’ [thought she] ‘who knows what may happen?’

“Thus conjecturing, she said to her lover, ‘you go home now, and come again, if you like, some other day.’ With these words she dismissed him, and then went and lay down beside her husband.¹ After a while she said, ‘It is very warm now in this place. There is a nice cool breeze under that tree yonder. Let us go and sleep *there*.’ With this pretext she then brought her husband beneath that same tree, and both slept there together. After his eyes had been closed for some time, she suddenly awoke him, saying, ‘My dear, why are you sleeping? Rise! and see a pretty sight indeed!’ He started up at once, and asked—‘What do you say?’ She rejoined, ‘As *my* father so is *your* father. How is this, that he has taken the anklets from my legs and made off with them, and has seen me naked and unrobed?’ Her husband replied, ‘Well, I shall give him “a blowing up”² for this in the morning—so that he will never be guilty of such misconduct again.’

¹ *Lit.*, “Having said this, she *there* (*udhar*—i.e., on the one hand), dismissed him, and, *here*, (*idhar*, i.e., on the other hand), herself going beside her husband, lay down.” This use of *idhar* and *udhar* is very idiomatic, but quite common.

² Or, “take him to task.” *Lit.*, “admonish him,” or “make him understand.”

"When morning arrived, he accordingly reproved his parent, saying, 'Dear father, it is not proper for you to go where your son and daughter-in-law are sleeping, and see them in every sort of condition.' His father replied, 'My son, have a little sense, your wretch of a wife was sleeping with another man—I saw them with my own eyes and took off these anklets from her legs.' On hearing this, the man was still more enraged—and said, 'You—reason or none¹—have become hostile to my wife. I know all about it. It was I, myself, that, on account of the heat, was then sleeping under the tree along with her—when you committed this impropriety.' So, hearing this, his father was heartily ashamed."

The parrot having finished this story, said, "Do you see how that woman so contrived that nothing could be said against her? She continued her amours with the strange man just as before,² and she brought dire disgrace on her father-in-law—while she herself retained her character as [one of] the best of women.³ Now, Khojista, away with you quickly! and embrace your sweetheart." Hearing this, his mistress was about to set out, when it dawned and the cock crew.

¹ *Lit.*, "*nolens, volens*."

² *Lit.*, "Her friendship with the stranger remained entire."

³ *Lit.*, "remained the best of the best."

Her visit was again postponed, that day too. She burst into tears, and repeated this couplet :

“ Again the night of meeting’s gone !—heigho !
And absence still prolonged by dawn !—heigho ! ”¹

¹ *Lit.*, “The night of meeting has passed away. Alas !
The dawn of separation again has come. Alas ! ”

TALE X.

A JACKAL TELLS A MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER OF A STRATAGEM,
BY MEANS OF WHICH SHE PRESERVES HER CHARACTER.

WHEN the sun had set and it became night, Khojista, her eyes filled with tears, her collar rent, and her bosom full of grief,—went to the parrot once more to take leave of him, and said, “Sagacious bird! I place the utmost confidence in your wisdom, and therefore come to you every night. My heart is poured out and my bosom rent, as an oblation to your skill—a sacrifice to your wisdom and a free-will offering to your fidelity. How shall I get to my lover and exchange embraces with him? for

‘The fire of love my heart consumes;
Such sorrow o’er my spirit comes.’¹

¹ *Lit.*, (2nd line,) “This calamity comes upon my soul.”

If you will not *now* give me leave—then when will you? If you will not now give me permission—then when will you? I beseech you [to grant it me], for this subject¹ engrosses all my thoughts.² [As the poet says] :

‘Let’s form a plan our freedom to obtain :

The spring has come—why, then, enchained remain?’³

“For God’s sake, tell me of some expedient by means of which I may quickly meet with him.” The parrot replied, “Khojista, this grief of yours goes to my heart, and as long as I live, I fear, I shall never be free from anxiety [on your account]. On what night have I refused to give you leave to go to your beloved?⁴ But you, yourself, put off your going and waste the nights in listening to my tales. In order that this secret amour of yours may not get wind and the report of it spread among the people, I will teach you an expedient—such as the jackal taught the merchant’s daughter—so that, as by means of it she was preserved from infamy—you, also, may come off scatheless.” Khojista asked, “What is the story about her? Tell it me.” So the parrot began as follows :

¹ Viz., how she could get to her lover.

² *Lit.*, “In that very deliberation I go about.”

³ *Lit.*, “But let us remain in deliberation of (concerning) our release—how [it may be affected] : Spring has come—why should we remain in prison?”

⁴ *Lit.*, “Saying, go not to your loved one.”

“ In a certain city there lived once a very illustrious and wealthy nobleman, whose son was ugly, deformed, and of weak intellect. When he reached manhood his father had him married to the daughter of a certain merchant. She, [on the contrary,] was exceedingly good-looking, wise and clever: and, moreover, an excellent musician, both vocal and instrumental.

“ It so happened that, one night, this young woman was sitting on the flat roof of her house, when she heard some one singing a sentimental ballad at the foot of the wall. The young woman, on hearing him, was fascinated with his voice; and descending from the house-top, she went up to him and said, ‘ Young man! my husband is very ugly and a regular fool. Could you so manage as to take me away with you to some other country? As long as I live I will be obedient to you.’ The result of the interview was that he assented to her proposition, and that very hour he set out with her in the direction of the neighbouring wilderness. After going a little way, they sat them down under a tree on the banks of a pond, and fell asleep in one another’s arms. An hour after the man awoke, and, having stripped off all the jewels from the young woman’s person, might be seen scampering off with them.¹ Meanwhile, on the unhappy woman’s opening her eyes, she neither saw any jewels on her

¹ *Lit.*, “ Himself appeared going about.”

body nor found her [pretended] lover on the [extemporized] bed. She then concluded that clearly the rogue had played her false. Filled with shame and penitence, she said, 'O God! pardon my wickedness. I have only met with my deserts.'¹

"Meanwhile daylight appeared and, going to the banks of the pond, she was standing there drowned in anxious thought, when a jackal, with a bone in its mouth, came to the same pond. Observing a fish on its bank, it threw away the bone, and rushed towards it. But the fish, on seeing the jackal, floundered into the water, upon which the latter turned back to seize the bone again—but it lost that too, for a dog had meanwhile run away with it. Observing this, the woman laughed aloud, and exclaimed, 'Well done! There is a well known proverb [which this brings to my mind]. "He who leaves the half to run after the whole, gets neither the whole nor the half."' On hearing this, the jackal asked, 'Lady, who are you who at such a time are standing all alone by this tank in this wood?' She told her whole story to the jackal. He, compassionating her sad plight, said, 'Don't be at all concerned, good lady! my advice to you is, to return home laughing and crying, like an insane person. Whoever shall then see you in this state will take pity on you, and will pass no remarks.'²

¹ *Lit.*, "As I have done, so I have got."

² Or, "will say nothing" [against you].

"Thereupon the woman, acting in accordance with his counsel, set out for her home, and forthwith, howling and yelling like a maniac, arrived at her house. In consequence of this stratagem, no one said anything bad of her¹—but, on the contrary, every one who saw her began to pity her."

The parrot having thus finished his story, said to Khojista, "Now is a propitious time,—go quickly and meet your beloved:—don't be at all concerned. Should any difficulty occur—which God forbid—I will teach you a stratagem, by means of which the difficulty will vanish and your character will remain untarnished."

Khojista, on hearing this, was about to set out, when, just then, the day dawned and the cock crew—so her visit was put off for that day also. She then repeated these lines and burst into tears.

"Neither my happy night dream true hath proved,
Nor, when the shades of night have been removed,
Cheer me the sunbeams of my much beloved."²

¹ *Lit.*, "Called her bad."

² *Lit.*, "My night-dream has not become true. My sun (*i.e.*, sweetheart—'sun of my soul') has not been met with in the morning."

TALE XI.

THE BRAHMAN WHO GAVE WAY TO AVARICE AND WAS KILLED
BY A TIGER.

WHEN the sun had set and it was evening—Khojista, having all the appearance of one distracted, came to the parrot to take leave of him—and said, “It is evident, parrot, that you care nothing about my distress, for you give no heed to¹ my words, and keep telling stories and tales—true or false—of this place and that. I don’t know what benefit you get from doing so.” The parrot replied, “My mistress, I wish to God you would go to him quickly, one way or other, and press him to your bosom. It is you, yourself, who do not go, but constantly procrastinate. It is no fault of mine [that you do so]. If such is your pleasure, then put an end to my life—but the truth is that I am no way to blame. Well, now, make haste

¹ *Lit.*, “give to the wind.”

and be off, and having made good your visit to him come back quickly; but bear this in mind, not to covet anything there—for avarice is a very bad thing;—should you give way to it, then you may meet with very much the same fate as the Brahman, in the story, did.”

Khojista asked him to tell her the story—and the parrot accordingly proceeded as follows :

“ In a certain city there was once a very rich Brahman. It so happened, however, that he lost all his wealth, and being reduced to poverty, set out for another country in pursuit of a livelihood. On his way, one day, he unexpectedly got into a jungle,¹ and there, seated on the bank of a pond, he saw a tiger, with a fox and a female stag standing before it. The Brahman, anxious for his own safety, stood rivetted to the spot through fear. Suddenly the eyes both of the fox and of the stag happened to light upon him—whereupon they thoughtfully said to one another, ‘ should the tiger see him, he will certainly kill him. Let us so contrive that instead of killing him he may give him a present.’ Having thus determined, they uttered a benediction on the tiger, and said to him : ‘ Your honour’s liberality has become so famous that to-day a Brahman even has come to ask something of

¹ i.e., “ forest, or wilderness.”

you, and there he stands before you with clasped hands.¹ The tiger, raising his head, saw the Brahman, and being pleased [at the flattery offered him] called him up to him, and felt great compassion for him.

“The result was, that he presented to the Brahman the whole of the gold and jewels that had belonged to the people he had formerly killed—and dismissed him in the kindest manner. Then the Brahman, taking with him much wealth, returned home, and began to live very comfortably.

“After awhile, the ill-fated Brahman, under the influence of covetousness, went again to the same tiger. This time, a wolf and a dog were standing beside him. On seeing the Brahman they were delighted, and said to the tiger, ‘What presumption and impudence in this man, to come into your honour’s presence, without your sending for him, and not think his life in danger.’² On hearing this the tiger foamed with rage,³ and leaping up from where it was, put an end to the Brahman with one stroke of its paw.”

¹ *Hāth bāndhe* more strictly means putting the palms of one’s outstretched hands together—a posture of respect and obeisance, or of deprecation, universally prevalent in India.

² *Khatar* means either “thought” or (as *Khatra*) “danger” “risk,” “fear;” so the sense here may be, “and not think of (or, have any fear for) his life.”

³ *Lit.*, “became a fire”—i.e., inflamed (with anger).

The parrot, having finished this story, said to Khojista, "Had that Brahman not yielded to covetousness, he would not have lost his life. Certain it is, that whoever is guilty of covetousness is sure to fall into some disaster. Well, now, there is still a watch of the night remaining ; be off quick ! and, having met your beloved, come back, after spending so much of the night in pleasure and enjoyment. Khojista, on hearing this, was about to go and embrace her lover. But, just then, it dawned. The cock crew, and her visit stood deferred for that day too. She then burst into tears and repeated this couplet :

"Of my night's meeting how've I been deprived ?
Wherefore hast thou, O dawn, so *soon* arrived." ¹

¹ *Lil.*, "Why hast thou wasted (or, spent in vain) the night of meeting ?
O dawn ! why art thou come ?"

TALE XII.

THE CAT WHO KILLED THE MICE AND FELL INTO DISGRACE
WITH THE OLD LION.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, dressed in a suit of the colour of the pomegranate flower, and decked with numerous jewels and trinkets, went to the parrot to take her leave of him. But, observing him drowned in thought, she said, “[†] Rejoicer of my soul! why are you sorrowful to-day, and wherefore should you give way to anxious reflection?” The parrot replied, “My mistress—it is grief for *you* that is killing me, and the cause of my anxiety is just this—that you keep coming to me every night to take leave of me, and, while I go on talking to you, morning makes its appearance; [and I fear] lest, all of a sudden, your husband should arrive, and you should get into disgrace from want of knowing [better how to act], like the cat who, having killed the mice, suffered

opprobrium in consequence. Khojista, hearing this, said, "O parrot! mice are cats' proper food. It is a wonder that a cat should get into disgrace for killing mice. I can't unravel the mystery." The parrot went on to say:

"In a certain wilderness there once lived a lion,¹ so very old that most of his teeth had fallen out of their sockets through age. If at any time he ate any animal food, the fibres of the meat would stick between his few remaining teeth. Now, a great many mice inhabited that *jungle*; and whenever the lion slept at night, the mice would come and pull out the meat fibres from his gums and devour them. On this account the lion suffered much uneasiness, and was being constantly wakened. At last, he said one day to the other animals—'Do you devise some means by which these mice may not bother me so, and that I may sleep in quiet. Then the fox, respectfully joining her hands,² thus addressed him. 'Hail! honoured sire.³ The cat is a devoted subject of your majesty's. Please to give her the post of sentinel, and then your majesty may pass the whole night comfortably.' This

¹ The word *sher* means either "a lion," or "a tiger"; and often one cannot tell, even from the context, which is meant. When it is of consequence to distinguish between them, a tiger is usually designated by *sher bāgh*, a lion by *sher singh*—the latter word in each case being specific.

² See note 1, p. 86.

³ *Lit.*, [May your] "excellency" [enjoy], "safety."

proposition of the fox's pleased the lion, so, calling for the cat, he appointed her to the post of *Kotwāl*,¹ and she accordingly entered on her office. The mice, as soon as they saw the cat, made off for the jungle.

"The lion, [in consequence,] enjoyed his night's repose to his heart's content, and raised the cat's pay.² But the cat, knowingly, kept frightening off the mice at a distance, and never caught or ate any of them : because, thought she, 'it is through them that I have obtained this post ; and if I eat them up there will be no use for me, and he will discharge me.' Thus reasoning, she imposed a fast upon herself and never ate any of them. However, it so happened that one day God so infatuated her that she brought her kitten too to the lion, and, joining her paws, thus addressed him. "I wish to-day to go somewhere on [particular] business. If permission be granted, I will leave my daughter whilst I am away, and will make my appearance again to-morrow morning.' The lion assented to this proposal of hers and willingly granted her the desired permission. Well, the cat went away on her business, and, meanwhile,³ her kitten, whenever it saw a mouse, instantly caught and ate it. The consequence was that, in one night and day, she had made an end

¹ i.e., police sergeant or magistrate.

² *Lit.*, "promoted her," but she really continued in the ~~same~~ post."

³ *Lit.*, "here" (*yahān*) as opposed to what took place ~~there~~ "there," where the mother-cat had gone. Confer *idhar* and *udhar*. Note 1, p. 76.

of them all! The following morning, the cat, on her arrival, saw that there was not a live mouse to be found.¹ Then, dashing her head [against the ground] she said—‘ You good for nothing! ² what’s this you have done, to go and kill all the mice? It was just on their account that I obtained this post of honour!’ The young one replied, ‘ Why did you not forbid me to do so, when you went?’ The upshot was that they were both filled with penitence and remorse. When the lion was informed that there was now not the vestige³ of a mouse to be found in that jungle, he dismissed the cat and discharged her from her *Kot-wāship*.”

When the parrot had finished this story, he said to Khojista, “ My mistress! you are excessively indolent—not to go even so far [as your lover’s house], while letting every night slip away to no purpose. I am afraid lest, somehow,⁴ your husband should suddenly arrive, and then you, too, should be put to shame [and sent off] like the cat. Khojista, on hearing this, was

¹ *Lit.*, “looked and found every mouse dead.”

² *Lit.*, “ Oh ill-fated one” (or “wretch.”)

³ *Lit.*, “name.”

⁴ *Kahin*—which literally means “somewhere,” or “anywhere”—we think may at times (as here) be translated “somehow,” “anyhow.” But perhaps the true (or better) rendering of the passage may be—“I fear lest your husband should suddenly arrive (*ā jāve*) anywhere” [you might happen to be—particularly a certain “somewhere”—where you assuredly ought *not* to be].

about to go ; when the day dawned and the cock crew. Her visit was once more deferred, that day also. She then burst into tears and repeated this couplet :

“ Vainly the night of meeting's gone !

Why hast thou come, O morning-dawn ? ”¹

¹ *Lit.*, “ The night of meeting is lost (spent) in vain. O dawn ! for what reason art thou [come] ? ”

TALE XIII.

SHAPUR, CHIEF OF THE FROGS, AND THE SNAKE.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon appeared, Khojista, having changed her dress and decked herself with numerous ornaments, went to the parrot to take leave of him, and thus addressed him :

“ O parrot ! I know you to be very wise, and consider your advice exceedingly good—and yet I never get any benefit from you. You never tell me of any plan by which I may get to my lover, and attain the object of my desire—long as I have been in striving for it.”¹

The parrot replied—“ Khojista, I am just considering how it may be brought about.”² Keep up your

¹ *Lit.*, “ although in that work (or affair) there has been delay.”

² *Lit.*, “ I am in that very consideration” (or “ deliberation.”)

spirits ; I will certainly secure for you a meeting with your lover. Listen, my lady ; they call him a wise man who rightly understands the beginning and end [of his projects]¹ : whereas he who does not look well to his own weal and woe (*i.e.*, to what may be good and what bad for him) will in the end come to grief—just as Shāpūr came to grief by neglecting the advice of his own species.” Khojista asked him who Shāpūr was, and to tell her the story about him.

“ In the country of Arabia,” said the parrot, “ there was a deep well, in which a number of frogs dwelt. One named Shāpūr was their chief. Acting, as he did, towards the rest of the frogs with great tyranny, they were much distressed, and consulted among themselves, saying, ‘ We are driven to desperation under his rule ; let us depose him, and appoint some one else of our tribe to be chief.’ Having so resolved, the frogs sent him about his business and elected another chieftain. He, being unable to help himself, repaired to the hole of a certain snake, and called to him in a very low tone.

“ The snake put out his head from his hole, and, seeing the frog, burst into laughter, and said, ‘ You fool ! you are dainty food for me, why have you come to me to throw away your life ?’ The frog replied,

¹ Or “ where to begin and where to end.”

‘I am the chief of my clan, and live in such and such a well. I have come to you to seek redress from my own people, in order that I may obtain my rights and better my circumstances.’ The snake was delighted at hearing this, and consoling him, said, ‘You show me the well, and I will go there and take vengeance upon them on your behalf.’

“Thereupon, the snake and the frog went together to the well and descended into it. The snake, having in a few days devoured all the frogs, then said to Shāpūr, ‘I am very hungry to-day; contrive some means by which I may get my belly filled.’ Shāpūr was alarmed, and, filled with remorse, said to himself, ‘What is this that I have done—to seek assistance from the snake, and bring destruction on my own kin? Well, what has been has been; it can’t be helped now.’ Having so mused, he said to the serpent, ‘You have been very kind to me in taking vengeance for me on these frogs; now, please to make your way home.’ The snake said, ‘I won’t go and leave you here alone.’ Shāpūr replied, ‘There is another well quite near to this, in which a great many frogs reside; if you bid me, I will manage by some trick or device to bring them here.’ The snake assented to his proposition, and let him go. Accordingly, under this pretext, he got out of that well, and, going to a certain pond, there remained concealed.

“Finally, the snake, after vainly looking for his return for several days, also got out of the well and made his way to his own hole.”

The parrot having finished his story, said, “Khojista, don’t delay, but be off quick and meet your lover.” Just as she was about to set out, the day dawned, and the bird of the morn uttered his cry. Her visit was deferred for that day too. Then, with her eyes filled with tears, she repeated these lines :

“ Warm friends in misfortune we two have grown ;

But—just as the thought her sweet lips had express’d—
The dawn-lamp of morning suddenly shone.

’Twas no longer night :—she retired to her rest.”¹

¹ *Lit.*, “ Intimate friends, then, we have become at last ; just then, when [these words] issued from her mouth, morning—like the lamp of dawn—was (*i.e.*, appeared): now night [was] not.”

TALE XIV.

THE LION¹ WHO WAS DISPOSSESSED OF HIS DEN BY A SIYAH
GOSH, OR LYNX.

WHEN the sun had set, and the moon made its appearance, Khojista, having changed her dress and applied cosmetics, &c., to her face,² went, frowning [in anger], to the parrot to take leave of him, and said, "O parrot, I come to you every night to take leave of you, and every time represent my state of uneasiness. It is not to listen to your stories I come, but³ you keep turning my brain—most improperly—by recounting to me [all sorts of] untrue tales. This is a well-known proverb [which you can apply to yourself], 'Better the miser that dismisses you at once, than the liberal man' [who postpones a response.]"⁴

¹ Or, "tiger."

² *Lit.*, "Having made up (or dressed out) her face."

³ *Lit.*, "That."

⁴ *Lit.*, "Than the generous person, the niggard is better, who quickly

The parrot replied, "Mistress, my talk will do you no harm, but, on the contrary, everything I say will prove for your benefit. You had better go quickly to-day, and come back when you have had a meeting with your lover. But, should any enemy intrude himself at your *rendezvous* and put you to shame, then have recourse to a stratagem, like the *Siyāh gosh*, and so gain your point." *Khojista* asked, "What is the story of the *Siyāh gosh*?" So the parrot thus began:—

"In a certain forest there once lived a lion,¹ who had a monkey for his friend and companion. It so happened that the lion set out for a ramble in another locality, so, leaving the monkey in his den, he said to him, 'Till I come back again, you take care of this place, and don't permit anyone to take up his abode in it.' Some days after, a *Siyāh gosh* took possession of the spot and made it his abode, the place being exceedingly convenient. The monkey then said to him, '*Siyāh gosh*, this is a lion's den—what right have you to remain here without his orders?—This is very improper.' The *Siyāh gosh* replied, 'This place belongs to me—I got it by inheritance from my

gives a dismissal," or "a reply," for *jawāb denā* may mean either, and in my free rendering I include both.

¹ Or "tiger" (*sher*)—but, as the noble lion is an animal more likely to be on friendly terms with one of another and inferior species than the selfish, ill-natured tiger, I prefer the rendering in the text.

father. You know nothing about it, and if you do, what have you to do with it? "Let the fire and the blacksmith settle it between them."¹

"On hearing this the monkey held his peace, saying, to himself, 'What matters it to me? Everyone in this world will meet with his deserts [and so will he].'² Subsequently the female mate of the *Siyāh gosh* said to him, 'It will be better to leave this place, for only one who wanted to throw away his life would contend with a lion.' The *Siyāh gosh* replied, 'When he comes, mate, I will contrive to eject him by a stratagem—so take heart; there is no cause for anxiety.'³

"The upshot was, that, a few days after, intelligence arrived that the lion was coming back. The monkey set out to convoy him [part of the way] and told him all about the *Siyāh gosh*, saying—'I forbid him to remain in the place, because it was a lion's den, and that, on his part, it was very wrong to continue there.

¹ The full proverb is *Āg jāne, lohā jāne; dhaunkne-wāle kī balā jāne*. Lit., "The fire knows, the blacksmith knows, the bellows-blower's fiddlestick knows." i.e., No one else knows anything about it, or has a right to interfere. It is no concern of yours.

² Lit., "As anyone shall act, so will he get."

³ The phrase, "*Kuchh parwā nahīn*" means commonly, "Never mind!" But I think here the more literal and stronger sense given is preferable and admissible.

To which he replied that he had¹ got the place, by inheritance from his father, that the lion's ancestors had nothing to do with it, [and therefore there was no reason] that he (the *Siyāh gosh*) should abandon it, and himself wander about in distress for want of a home.' Hearing this, the lion said, 'From this account of yours, ape, it is evident that it is not a *Siyāh gosh*, but some animal who possesses more strength than even I, that speaks thus fearlessly. For otherwise, what power has a *Siyāh gosh* to take possession of my den?' The monkey replied, 'Sir, I swear by God, it is nothing else but an ill-fated *Syāh gosh*—there *is* no animal stronger than you. If you will but cast the slightest glance at him, he will die for terror. You just come and see him; I am not such a fool as to say anything to you merely out of my own head.' The lion then said to the monkey, 'In the name of God,² what's this you are saying, ape?'³ There are many animals which are small to look at, but which are greater than I as regards courage and strength. It may possibly be one of *them*.' So saying, the lion went towards his den—all of a tremor. But before his arrival, the *Siyāh gosh* had said to his mate, 'As soon as the lion arrives,

¹ *Lit.*, "That I have," &c., according to Eastern idiom, which prefers the *oratio directa* to the *obliqua*.

² *Lit.*, "[As] God is true."

³ Both *bāndar* and *boznī* mean either "monkey" or "ape," and are interchangeable. I follow the original here in varying the term.

you make your little ones get up a yelping—and if I ask what they are crying for, then you say, “They are wanting some new lion-flesh—they won’t eat the stale.””

“Accordingly, when the lion got near the place, and the young lynxes began to yelp, the *Siyāh gosh* asked ‘what are they howling for?’ The mother replied, ‘They are hungry.’ The *Siyāh gosh* said, ‘So much lion’s flesh as I brought them only yesterday! is there none of it remaining?’ His mate replied, ‘All that was over has been laid by; but they want some *fresh* meat.’ Then said he to the whelps, ‘You just be patient for a little and comfort yourselves—I have heard that a very large lion has come into this forest to-day. If such be the case, then, please God, I will immediately kill and bring him here, and then you can eat your bellies’ fill, to your heart’s delight.’ The lion, on hearing these words, could restrain himself no longer, and fled as if for his life;¹ fearing that he would in reality catch him, and give him to his cubs to eat. He did not think for a moment that it was only a *Siyāh gosh*. On afterwards meeting with the monkey, he said to him, ‘Did not I tell you that it was not a *Siyāh gosh*, but some large powerful animal that had taken possession of my den?’ The

¹ *Lit.*, “Without restraint abandoning his life (i.e., giving it up as lost, if he stayed) fled.”

monkey replied, 'O lion, he is deceiving you! don't be afraid, for, I assure you, he is a very weak and small animal.' The lion, hearing this, returned to his den; upon which the female Syāh gosh again made her cubs set up a howl; and then her mate asked, 'Why are the young ones making a clamour? You make them be quiet; assuredly I will get some lion's flesh to-day. For, among my friends there is a monkey, who has promised me, with an oath, that, one way or other, he will bring a lion to me¹ to-day:—by some stratagem he will certainly bring him. Just wait a moment or two and coax the cubs; but don't speak loud, or he will hear your voice and not come here.'

"As soon as the lion heard these words, he instantly tore the monkey in pieces and fled, and never showed his face there again."

The parrot having finished his story, said, "To-day, Khojista, is a lucky day and a propitious time: now be off quick and meet your beloved." Hearing this Khojista was about to go, when the day dawned and the cock crew. Her visit was once more deferred. Then, her eyes filling with tears, she repeated this couplet:—²

¹ *Lit.*, "I am bringing a lion to thee."

² The first line of this couplet is easy enough, meaning literally, "There

"No means there seems of going to him—night or day :
I'm in an awkward fix! I cannot see my way."

is no means of my going there, by day nor by night." But both the true reading and the proper rendering of the second line are doubtful. In Dr. Forbes's edition it runs, "*Dekhiye kaisi bane ān pari bāt ko dhab*." And he gives in his "Vocabulary" *ān pari bāt* as a phrase meaning "a pledged word." (?) Dr. Gilchrist's edition (Calcutta, 1839) gives "*bāt kudhab*" ("an ugly affair.") (?) Shakespear gives *ānparnā* as a verb, meaning "to arrive," "reach" (v. n.) and (2) "To acquire, get, v. a. (?)"—perhaps referring to this line particularly. According to Forbes's reading and Vocabulary, the construction of the sentence would properly be *Dekhiye ān pari bāt ko kaisi dhab bane*. "Let us look to (i.e., consider) my pledged word, in what manner it may be fulfilled?" But *dhab* is a masculine word, as is evident, from the first line (though in *Dakhinī*, Shakespear says, it is feminine). On consulting that distinguished Oriental scholar, Mr. J. T. Platts, on the text, he kindly favoured me with the following valuable remarks, which I trust he will forgive my inserting here. "I cannot for a moment accept Forbes's translation of the words *ān pari bāt*, &c., or his idea, that *dhab*, in the last verse of the couplet in question, is a substantive. The last word is *ku-dhab*, and is so pronounced (i.e., with the vowel of *ku* short), although Mahomedan writers commonly write it *کو*. Similarly

they write *اوسکی*, but they always pronounce it *uske*. It is a common practice with them to represent the sound *u* at the beginning of a word by *او*, and [at the end of a word by *و*. Moreover, that the vowel is short, is proved conclusively, I think, by the scansion of the couplet, which is of the metre *Ramāl*, the feet being — ˘ — — | — ˘ — — | ˘ ˘ — — | ˘ ˘ — — ||. Forbes should have punctuated the line thus:—

Dekhiye kaisi bane—ān pari bāt kudhab.

which, put in prose order, would be—*Kudhab bāt ān pari hai—dekhiye kaisi bane*.

"An untoward circumstance has arisen (or interposed); let us (me) see how the thing may be managed (or contrived)."

TALE XV.

ZARIR, THE WEAVER, WHOM FORTUNE WOULD NOT BEFRIEND.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, having put on stylish attire, and decked herself with costly jewels, went to the parrot, at the close of the first watch of night, to take leave of him, and thus addressed him, "O parrot, for a long time I have attended to your advice, and listened to your words, but no advantage has accrued to me from your friendship." The parrot replied, "My mistress, why are you angry with *me*? Every night do I encourage you to go; the fault is not mine, but destiny is against you and brings harm to you, just as the destiny of Zarīr the weaver was adverse to him." Khojista asked him to tell her the story about him, so the parrot thus began :—

"In a certain city there was once a person called

Zarîr, a weaver of silk cloth, who plied his loom incessantly, and yet he never made any profits from his work. He had a friend, who was a weaver of coarse cloth. One day Zarîr went to his abode, and observed his house was filled with gold and jewels, wealth and furniture, like a rich man's. He was astonished and said to himself, I prepare cloth proper for men of wealth and fit for kings. How is it that I cannot get salt to my bread? and this weaver of coarse cloth—whence has he acquired so much wealth? Full of these thoughts he reached his home, and said to his wife, "I won't live any longer in this heedless city, for the people of this place do not appreciate my worth, and no one [here] rightly estimates my skill. I feel it my duty to go to some other city, where my profession is held in estimation.

"I to a distant town will go,
And, working there, will wealthy grow."¹

Hearing this, his wife laughed, and repeated this couplet:—

"Your past ill-luck will go with you,
Then what advantage will accrue?"²

"Then she began to reason with him, saying, 'It is

¹ *Lit.* "I will now go to a foreign city, and from thence will earn and bring back gold in hard cash.

² *Lit.* "This very luck if you shall take away from here, then what dust will you earn and bring back.

not right to leave your own country, so don't go. Whatever is your destiny you will meet with here, and beyond that you will get nowhere else.'

"However, he would not take her advice, but set out in a particular direction and arrived in a certain city. There he carried on his trade for a considerable time, and, when he had earned a large sum of money, he set out again to return home. One night, having halted in a certain locality, he kept awake till midnight. At last, overpowered by drowsiness, he fell asleep, and meanwhile a thief came and made off with his bag of rupees. Zarīr just then awoke, and ran after him, but did not succeed in catching him. So, there being no help for it, he returned to the same city, and having amassed considerable wealth, he again set out for his home."

"When the first watch of the night had elapsed, he halted at a certain place, but again, in spite of all the care he took of his hoard, a thief came and decamped with it.

"Then the poor man said to himself, the fates are against my ever being rich,¹ and therefore it is that a thief always makes off with my money. At length empty-handed, he reached his home, and informed his

¹ *Lit.*, "Gold is not in my destiny."

wife of all that had befallen him. She replied, 'I told you at the first, that, if it was not in your destiny,¹ you would never get rich² anywhere. You would not listen to my advice, but went on a journey elsewhere. Tell me now, what have you got by it?' Zarīr felt mortified and ashamed."

The parrot, having finished his story, said to Khojista, "Now don't delay any longer Off with you and embrace your beloved!" Khojista, on hearing this, was about to go and press him to her bosom. But just then it dawned, and the cock crew. Her departure was thus once more deferred for that day too. Then, bursting into tears, she repeated this couplet:—

"The night of hope is at an end,]
And still no meeting with my friend[!]"³

¹ *Lit.*, "in default of (or, despite) destiny."

² *Lit.*, "Anything."

³ *Lit.*, "And separation again has shown its face."

TALE XVI.

THE FOUR RICH PERSONS WHO BECAME POOR.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, her breast filled with grief and her eyes with tears, crying and sighing, went to the parrot, and thus addressed him, "My green-clad bird, I am dying of love-grief, and you every night waste my time with your admonitions and discourses."¹

"Your unasked for advice, oh! forbear to obtrude;
I am crazy with love, it can do me no good."²

The parrot replied, "What is this you say, Khojista? you *ought* to listen to the advice of friends, for whoever does not attend to what *they* say, is sure to come

¹ *Lit.*, "You waste every night with my admonition and conversation.

² *Lit.*, "Do not make me hear words of advice. I am in love, what [benefit is there] to me from advice?"

to grief and be disgraced, just as was the case with the man in the story.¹

Khojista said, "“My good parrot, I am devoted to you, soul and body; do tell me that story.””²

“In the city of Balkh,” said the parrot, “there once lived four wealthy persons, mutual friends. It so happened, however, that all four became poor, and in their distress, they applied to a certain sage for his advice. To him each of them told his own story. The *hakim* (or sage) compassionated them, and giving to each of them a talisman,³ said, ‘Each of you put your respective *muhra* on your head and go your ways. On whatever spot the talisman of each falls, let him dig there, and whatever casts up will belong to him.’ Accordingly all four, having thereupon placed each his talisman on his head, took their departure, all in the same direction.

“When they had gone several *koses*,⁴ the *muhra* of

¹ *Lit.*, “In the [same] way that a certain person became penitent and ashamed.”

² *Lit.*, “I am thy sacrifice. Tell me what sort of a story it is.”

³ The word *muhra* means originally “a shell,” or “any polished round stone (such as snake-stone),” but is commonly used to signify “a charm,” or “talisman”—a corruption of the Arabic *filism* (or *filamon*), and its Greek derivative *τέλεσμα*.

⁴ A *Kos* is equal to about two miles English.

one fell from his head. He then dug on the spot and found copper. 'I consider this copper,' said he to the other three, 'as better than gold; if you like, you can all remain here with me.' They did not accept his invitation, but went on. They had not gone far, when the talisman fell from the head of a second, who, on digging in the ground, found silver. Then he, likewise, said to the other two, 'You remain with me. The silver is abundant, we might all make a livelihood out of it; each of you consider it as his own as much as mine.' However, they did not take his [kind] advice, but went on till the talisman of the third fell from his head, and when he, too, dug up the ground, lo! gold was found. Delighted with his luck, he said to the fourth (his only remaining companion), 'Well, now, there can be nothing better than this. I should like much for us *both* to remain here,'¹ But he replied, 'No, I will go on, and probably I shall find a mine of jewels; why should I stay here?' So saying, he proceeded forwards; when he had got about a kos farther, *his* talisman also fell, and on his likewise digging in the ground, iron made its appearance. Seeing this result, he was exceedingly chagrined, and said to himself, 'Why did I leave the gold, and not take my friend's advice? True it is—

¹ *Lit.*, "We wish that we" (*i.e.*, I) "and you should remain just here." Forbes puts the sign of interrogation to this clause, which is evidently a mistake, perhaps a mere misprint.

“Those who refuse a friend’s advice to take,
Will have the ashes of remorse to rake.”¹

So, abandoning the iron, he went in search of his companion who had discovered the gold mine, but he neither found him nor the gold. Then he went after the man with the silver, but could not find him either; and from thence he next went where he had left the copper discoverer, but him, also, he failed to find. Then bemoaning his destiny, he said, ‘No man ever yet got beyond what he was predestined to get.’ At last he went to the sage’s house, but even him he did not find there. The poor fellow, overwhelmed with remorse, then repeated these lines :—

“To whom shall I my foolish conduct tell?
There’s nothing I have done has turned out well.”²

When the parrot had concluded this story, he said to Khojista, “Whoever does not mind the words of his friends, will be sure to repent of it just as he did. Well, now go and embrace your beloved, and enjoy the delights of youthful passion.” On hearing these words, Khojista was just about to set out, when the morning arrived, and the cock crew. She then re-

¹ *Lit.*, “Those who do not mind the words of a friend, sift the dust of repentance.” We have here an instance of the singular pronoun *one* used for the ordinary plural *we*, and with the verb in the plural.

² *Lit.*, “To whom may I tell what I have done? What I have done, I have done ill.”

peated these lines in accord with her state [and feelings] and burst into tears :—

“ Oh, night of meeting, haste to my relief!

This daily absence fills my soul with grief.”¹

¹ *Lit.*, “O night of meeting! come thou now quickly. The day of separation vexes me.”

TALE XVII.

THE JACKAL THAT WAS MADE KING, AND THEN KILLED.

WHEN the night was come and the day gone, Kho-jista went to the parrot to take leave of him; but perceiving him full of anxious thought, she said, "My sage bird! for whom are you grieving, and why are you sitting silent?" The parrot replied, "Khojista! thou art called daughter-in-law in a family of rank. Thou knowest not whether the object of thy [secret] passion be thine equal in rank, or belonging to quite a different one.¹ If he be thine equal in status, then there is no harm in thy having an amour with him, but otherwise thou shouldst have nothing to do with him."²

"The high with the high should unite,
The low to the low be confined;

¹ *Lit.*, "be like thee, or of some other tribe (or caste)."

² *Lit.*, "withholding from him is better."

With water mix water—'tis right—
But mud should with mud be combined.”¹

Khojista said, “My confidential friend, that is all very true; but how am I to ascertain his circumstances?”
“A man’s merits and demerits,” rejoined the parrot, “are known by his speech. Perhaps you have never heard the story of the jackal?”² Khojista said, “What is the story? For God’s sake, tell it me, my darling.”
So the parrot commenced it as follows:—

“There was once a jackal that used constantly to go into a certain city, and to thrust his snout into every person’s dish with the greatest impudence. Well, one night, according to custom, he entered the house of a certain indigo manufacturer; but, just as he was thrusting his beak into his vat, he fell into it, and his whole body was dyed indigo-colour. With the greatest difficulty he managed to clamber out again, and made off for the jungle. On account of his strange colour, the beasts of the forest did not recognise him, and supposing him to be some very distinguished animal, proposed to make him their

¹ *Lit.*, “Let the highest (or best) with the highest mix (or be united); the low mix with the low; let water mix with water, mud with mud.”

² *Gidār*, the word used here, and throughout the tale, is the Hindū (Indian) word for the animal called in Persian *shaghāl* (from the Sanskrit *śṛigāl*), of which our English “jackal” is an obvious corruption. In Indian fables, this animal generally takes the place assigned to the fox by the Arabic and European fabulists, Lokman, Æsop, &c.

king. Having so decided, the jackals accordingly elected him their king, and placed themselves entirely under his command. The jackal, now made chief, in order that no one might recognise him by his voice, made it his practice to place near him only the very smallest animals. Accordingly, whenever he held his court, he used to arrange *them* in the first rank, and the foxes in the second, the stags and monkeys in the third, the wolves in the fourth, the lions and tigers in the fifth, and the elephants in the sixth. Then he would say, 'You all remain each in his own assigned position.' And in the evening, when the jackals began to yelp, he indulged his natural tendency by yelping along with them [but *only* then] by which means he succeeded in not being recognised by any of the beasts.

"After some days the elected chief, being angry [for some reason] with his brother jackals, dismissed them all from his immediate presence, and promoted the lions, tigers, and elephants to their post [as his body-guard and chief ministers]. As soon as it was night, the discarded jackals [as usual, but now] at a distance, began their peculiar cry, and the chieftain himself, at his post of honour, joined them therein. The wild beasts which were standing around him, hearing the well-known voice, at once recognised his species, and were heartily ashamed [of their own

folly]. Without an hour's delay they [tore him in pieces and] made minced meat of him."

Having told his tale, the parrot said to Khojista, "Thus you see, my lady, every man's virtues and vices are cognizable by his speech.

"Did ever eloquence from innate dulness flow,
Or parrot's dulcet notes from vulgar, clam'rous crow?
A clown a hundred times might traverse Irāk's plain,
Yet ne'er the noble gait of an Irākī gain."¹

"Now go to your beloved, and by conversation with him, learn his virtues and his failings." On hearing this, she was just on the point of starting to meet her lover, when it dawned and the cock crew, so her visit was once more deferred [to another day]. She burst into tears, and repeated this couplet:—

"Alas ! what hast thou done, O dawn ?
Again the night of meeting's gone !"²

¹ *Lit.*, "Where has eloquent speech been produced from an uncouth nature? When, from the doleful croak of a crow, has the [pleasing] talk of a parrot been produced? If a clown were to visit a hundred times the country of 'Irāk, yet why [on that account] would the gait of an 'Irākī be produced in him?" There are two provinces called 'Irāk, the one in Persia ('Irāk-Ajami), comprehending ancient Media; and the other in Turkey ('Irāk-'Arabi), the ancient Chaldea. The natives of the former, especially, are distinguished for their carriage and urbanity.

² *Lit.*, (Second line) "Thou hast lost (or parted with) the night of meeting."

TALE XVIII.

THE AMOUR OF BASHIR WITH A WOMAN NAMED CHANDAR.

WHEN the sun had set, and the moon arisen, Khojista went to the parrot to take leave of him, and thus addressed the bird: “Parrot, is it to take leave of you that I come to you every night, or to listen to your advice [—which is it?]
—that you keep constantly telling me untrue tales about people in one place or other, in order to display your wisdom? Well! [as the poet¹ says:]—

‘The flowing tears *commands* will but increase :

Rise! from my pillow, rise!

Cease vainly to advise!

Or else my breath, and not my tears, will cease.’”²

The parrot replied, “Khojista, be comforted. Soon now will you meet with your beloved, and all your

¹ *Mir* ‘Atash.

² *Lit.*, “Tears flowing—can scarcely again be checked by force. Oh

troubles be ended; just as a certain Arab at first encountered [many difficulties and] trials, but at last got [rid of them all, and was made happy by obtaining] the object of his desire.”¹

‘No treasure e’er by mortal was secured,
Till grief and trouble he had first endured.’”

Hearing these words, Khojista said, “O parrot! your mouth is full of butter² and sugar; I yield myself up entirely to you, as your devoted slave.³ Tell me then, truly, how shall I attain to that longed-for bliss? It is a well-known proverb, ‘When hope lives, despondency dies.’”

The parrot then commenced his story, as follows:—
“In a certain city there once lived a handsome young man, named Bashīr, who had an amour with a lovely [married] woman, called Chandar. After a while, all the particulars of his intrigue with her got wind. Her husband, thereupon, took her back to her paternal home, and left her there in charge of her parents. Meanwhile, Bashīr gave himself up to weeping, night and day, on account of his separation [from the object

adviser! rise from my pillow! for I am being choked (by emotion.)” The agonising friend is supposed to be seated at the bedside (leaning on the pillow) of the love-sick weeper—who refuses to be comforted.

¹ *Lit.*, “Got *rāḥat*,” i.e. “rest.” The succeeding couplet is nearly literal.

² *Lit.*, “*ghī*, i.e., butter refined by boiling.”

³ *Lit.*, “I [am] a complete sacrifice [to you]—*main wāri, wāri*.”

of his unlawful passion], and spent his whole time in sighing and lamentation. He had an old friend—an Arab. To him [in his distress] he went, and said, 'My beloved friend, I am going to Chandar's house; it will be better if you will go with me, for, as people say, "two are better than one."' "

"The Arab assented, and accompanied him. Having, after two or three days, arrived near the town where she resided, Bashīr sat him down under a tree, and sent his friend the Arab to Chandar's house to inform her of his arrival. The fellow, thereupon, went to her house and said to her, 'Chandar, Bashīr sends his *salām* to you. He is anxious to have an interview with you, and is now sitting under such and such a tree.' On hearing this gladsome news, Chandar was excessively delighted and said to him, 'My good sir, go at once and convey to him my hearty salutations, and give him this message; that I will assuredly go to him to-night under the tree. I have much to say to him, but will wait till we meet, when I shall tell him all.' The Arab, thereupon, returned to Bashīr with the message, and told him exactly what she had said. When night arrived, Chandar made her appearance, dressed magnificently, and throwing her arms around Bashīr burst into tears. He, too, pressed her to his breast, and likewise wept aloud—unable to restrain his feelings.

“ Who could the mournful scene pourtray—
While each to pent-up woe gave way?
Two grief-clouds shedding tears, as when
Sāwan and Bhādūn meet, in rain.”¹

“ When Bashīr had done weeping he said, ‘ Chandar, you must stay here to-night.’ She replied, ‘ On one condition only. If this Arab will do a certain thing!’ ‘ What is that?’ asked the Arab. ‘ Having dressed yourself in my clothes,’ said Chandar, ‘ you must go to my house, and, concealing your face with a veil, remain sitting—without uttering a word—in the inner court. Should my husband come and bring a cup of milk and bid you drink it, don’t you take it, nor open your veil. In the end, he will set down the cup-full of milk beside you and leave the house. After that, you can drink your fill of the milk, to your heart’s content.’ The Arab consented to her proposal, went at once to her house, and, having covered his face with a veil, sat down in the quadrangle in silence. Meanwhile, Chandar’s husband arrived, bringing with him a cup-full of milk, and said [to his supposed wife,] ‘ My dear ! I have brought

¹ *Lit.*, “ Can (or may) I tell the circumstances of that time ; how they were weeping ? one making a loud noise, the other sobbing ; two sorrow-clouds have met, just as [when] Bhādūn meets with Sāwan.” *Sāwan* (July) and *Bhādūn* (August), are the two rainiest months in India generally. “ The rains usually commence about June, and go on to about the end of September ; so that *Sāwan* and *Bhādūn* ‘ meet ’ about the middle of the wet season.”

this cup of milk for you; lift up your veil, and drink it.' *She*, however [to speak according to the impersonated sex] would neither remove her veil nor take the cup. At this he got angry, and giving her a severe whipping, said, 'In spite of all my entreaties and expressions of affection, you will neither uncover your face nor speak a word!' The result was, that he administered such a flogging, that the poor victim's back was made black and blue, and actually cut open before he left off and took his departure. When he had gone, the unlucky Arab at one time was bewailing his sad plight, and at another, could not help laughing at it. Meanwhile, Chandar's mother came and began scolding [her supposed daughter.] 'My good lady,' said she, 'I am constantly advising you and saying, "My dear! it is not right, this waywardness of yours towards your husband. Why not be submissive to him, my darling?" If you grieve about Bashir, you will never see your husband's face again.' Having thus spoken, she went to her (Chandar's) sister and said, 'My beloved child, *you* go and admonish her. Ask her *why* she will not be reconciled to her husband.' Hearing this, Chandar's sister (who in truth was beautiful as the [full] moon)¹ came, and embracing the Arab, said, 'Sister, *don't* quarrel with your husband!'

"The Arab, on seeing her pretty face, forgot all his

¹ "Chandar" means the moon.

grief, and lifting his veil from his countenance, said, 'Your sister has gone to Bashīr, and sent me here to personify her. See what suffering I have endured on her account! Now, it is quite right that you should sleep with me and not let out the secret. Otherwise, both I and your sister will be disgraced.' Hearing these words, she laughed, and slept with him accordingly. As it advanced towards morning, the Arab returned to Chandar, and she asked him, 'How he had passed the night? and what had happened to him?' He told her all about her husband's doings and sayings, and a good deal about her sister;¹ and, showing her his back, burst into tears.

"Chandar was exceedingly vexed² on his account, but she little knew that he had spent the greater part³ of the night with her sister in loving dalliance and sport; and thus had dispelled all sorrows from his heart."

The parrot, having told his story, said, "Khojista! now be off with you, and enjoy the kindly caresses of your beloved."

On hearing this, Khojista wanted to go, but just

¹ *Lit.*, "All the circumstances of her husband and her sister," but, as forthwith appears, he did *not* tell her *all about the sister*.

² *Lit.*, "Ashamed" (which is hardly a suitable term), or "full of remorse," which would do.

³ *Lit.*, "The whole night;" but this was not the fact.

then it became morning, and the cock crew. Her going, therefore, that night too, was stayed. She began to weep bitterly, and repeated these lines :—

“ Again the dawn has shown its hated face,
That ever keeps me from my love’s embrace.”

¹ *Lit.*, “ The dawn which [on previous occasions] had separated me from my friend ; that dawn has again come.”

TALE XIX.

THE RIDING MARE THAT DIED IN CONSEQUENCE OF BEING
KICKED BY A TRADESMAN'S HORSE.

WHEN the sun had set, and the moon arisen, Khojista, elegantly dressed, went to the parrot to take her leave of him, and said, "I feel to-day excessive uneasiness at heart on account of this prolonged separation [from the object of my affections.]

'Will any to my love this message take?
My passion urges me all bounds to break!'

"Although I could go to my beloved without your leave, I don't consider it advisable to do so, for I rely on your intelligence. If you will give me permission to-night, I will then remain under conscious obligation

¹ Or, "Who will this message to my lover take?" *Lit.*, "Will anyone convey this message to the abode of my friend? Uncontrollableness has kept (*i.e.*, either upheld or restrained) me as far as control," meaning, her passion could no longer submit to control, or restraint.

to you all the rest of my life, and constantly invoke blessings on you." The parrot said, "My mistress! those who are sensible never act without advice, and you yourself are wise in that you never do anything [of consequence] without consultation. The fact is that, should anyone (which God forbid) act inimically towards you, you will never—from your good sense and discretion—fall into any calamity; just as a certain merchant, through his own wisdom and knowledge, formed such a device, when in a difficulty, that he escaped from it without any grounds for shame or remorse.

'No baseness shall the wise man's reputation stain,
No honour shall the fool from anyone obtain.'"¹

Khojista asked what the story was he referred to. So the parrot thus proceeded:—

"In former times there was a very intelligent merchant, who possessed a bad-tempered horse. One day this man was sitting eating his dinner, in the threshold of his house. Meanwhile, a stranger came up riding on a mare, and, dismounting, was about to tie his mare beside the merchant's horse, and preparing to partake of some victuals he had with him. The mer-

¹ *Lit.*, "Meanness does not reach (attach itself to, as a 'result' of bad actions) the wise man. The fool has not honour in the presence of anyone."

chant said to him, 'Don't tie your mare near my horse, else you'll meet with a loss; and don't eat beside me, or you'll repent of it.'¹ Hearing this the man, nevertheless, tied his mare at that very spot, and sitting down beside the merchant, proceeded to eat his dinner. The latter said to him, 'Who are you that without my invitation are eating along with me?' The stranger, pretending to be deaf, made no reply. So the merchant thought he must be either deaf or dumb, and said no more. Meanwhile, his horse inflicted such a kick on the said mare, that her belly was rent and she died. Then her owner began to quarrel with the merchant, saying, 'Indisputably. I shall exact the price of her from you; your horse has killed my mare.' Thereupon the man went to the *Kāzī* (judge), and made a complaint. The *Kāzī* summoned the merchant before him. Accordingly he presented himself in court, but feigned himself dumb. Whatever the judge asked him, he made no reply. The *Kāzī* said, 'The man is dumb; it is no fault of his.' The plaintiff said, 'Your worship, how do you know that he is dumb? He told me at first that his horse was vicious, and that I must not tie my mare near him. Now, he is pretending to be dumb!' The *Kāzī* said, 'Tush! you are a rascally fool! You yourself attest that he warned you, and yet you make a claim for damages on account of your mare! What

¹ *Lit.*, "You will experience shame (or disgrace)."

blame was there on his part in this case? Be off with you, out of my presence!’ Accordingly, the judge had the man turned out of court and dismissed the merchant.”

The parrot having thus finished his story, said to Klojista, “Well now, don’t delay! Away with you and embrace your beloved!” His mistress, on hearing this, was about to set out—that she might throw her arms around her lover, but just then it dawned, and the cock crew. Her visit was therefore again deferred to another day. She burst into tears, and sobbed out these lines:—

“Again, O dawn, and all through thee,
The night of hope is lost to me!”¹

¹ *Lit.*, “O dawn! by thy hand (*i.e.*, means) having lost the night of hope, I now sit (or remain).”

TALE XX.

THE WOMAN WHO BY A STRATAGEM ESCAPED OUT OF THE
CLUTCHES OF A LION.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista again went to take leave of the parrot, and thus addressed him, “My bosom friend, have compassion on me, and to-night quickly give me leave, and whatever you have to say, say quickly.” The parrot replied, “My lady, I have tried you often, and found you wise; you have no use of advice from me. Should any mishap befall you—which God forbid!—you must devise some such trick as the woman [in the story] had recourse to with the lion in the forest, by means of which she escaped scatheless.” Khojista asked him what the story was, so the parrot proceeded to tell it.

“There was once,” [said he] “a man in a certain city, whose wife had a very bad disposition and a

very long tongue. One day her husband, on account of some misconduct on her part, gave her a severe flogging. Thereupon the woman, taking her two boys with her, ran off to the neighbouring jungle. It so happened that she there caught sight of a lion. On seeing him she was greatly afraid, and, in her fright, began to say, 'I have done very wrong in going away without my husband's consent. If, now, no calamity befall me at the hands of this lion, I will never again leave home, but always continue obedient to my husband.'

"Thereupon the woman strategically said to the lion, 'Come here, and listen to something I have to tell you.' The lion, wondering what it might be, said to her, 'Well, tell me what you have got to say.' She replied, 'There is in this forest such a huge lion that both men and beasts are all afraid of him. And the king, too, to pacify him, is in the habit of sending two or three of his subjects as food to him. Accordingly, to-day the lot has fallen on me and these two boys of mine. If you are so disposed, take these boys from me, and, having eaten them, flee from this forest so that I may go my way alone.'

"On hearing these words, the lion said, 'Well, since you have confided to me the whole truth about yourself, it would not be advisable to devour either

you or your children, lest, if I stop to do so, I should miss the opportunity of escaping myself from the monster you speak of.' So saying, the lion took his departure in one direction, and she, taking another, reached home in safety with her children; and for all the rest of her life remained obedient to her husband."

Having finished his tale, the parrot said to Khojista, "Now, don't delay, but be off to your sweetheart."

"Go, in your lover's bosom fondling lie;
Bid all the griefs of day and night good-bye!"¹

Hearing this, Khojista was about to go to him, and enjoy the sweetest happiness this life can yield.² But just then it became morning and the cock crew, so her visit was again put off. She burst into tears, and repeated these lines :—

"Think not, beloved, that away from thee,
Peace or repose can e'er be felt by me;
For day and night, like well-dried wood on fire,
I smoulder on, consumed by fond desire."³

¹ *Lit.*, "Go, and touched by the bosom of thy lover, sleep. Wash away, with both your hands, the pain (troubles) of day and night."

² *Lit.*, "Life's pleasure."

³ *Lit.*, "Beloved, think not this, that to me, separated from thee, there is peace. [Like] the wood of a dry forest, I am inflamed (on fire) day and night." The original lines are in the Braj dialect. *Tohe* and *mohe* = *tujhe* and *mujhe*.

TALE XXI.

THE KING, THE PRINCE, THE FROG, AND THE SNAKE.

WHEN the sun had disappeared and the moon come forth, Khojista went to the parrot to take leave of him, and said, "When shall the time be, O parrot, when I shall reach my lover? I long to go, but cannot.

' My every plan hath overturnéd been,
And every medicine useless proved to be .
My heart *this* end hath of its sickness seen—
An end is put to happiness and me !''

I cannot understand what sort of destiny mine is that always keeps me away from him." The parrot replied, "Khojista, my heart assures me that you will quickly meet with your beloved. But when you meet

¹ *Lit.*, "All [our] schemes have been upset. Medicine has done no good (or, been of no use). [My] heart has seen this sickness, [that] at last it has finished its work" (*i.e.*, has been the death of me).

with him, you must perform all the conditions and requirements of friendship and leave not one of them unfulfilled; just as *Khālīs* and *Mukhlīs* did in serving the prince." His mistress said, "What is the story about them? tell it me." The parrot thus commenced it:—

"Once on a time there was a great king who had two sons. When he died, the eldest son succeeded to his crown and throne, who desired to kill his younger brother. That poor young man, becoming aware of his design, was afraid, and fled from the capital. After a few days, he reached a certain tank (or small lake) where his attention was attracted by a serpent which had seized on a frog. The frog was making a great uproar, and gave utterance to the following couplet:—

"Would God some friend were near—alert and brave—
Me from this serpent's murd'rous fangs to save."¹

"On hearing this couplet, the prince, by means of threats, so frightened the serpent that it let go the frog, which immediately jumped into the water, while the snake continued where it was. The prince then felt ashamed of his conduct towards the latter, and said to himself, 'Why have I robbed it of its prey? what have I done?' Therefore he cut a piece of

¹ *Lit.*, "O Lord! at such a juncture may some such one come, who may rescue my soul (i.e. *me*) from the mouth of this snake."

flesh from his own body and threw it to the serpent, which seizing the dainty morsel went off with it to its mate. She, having eaten the flesh, said, 'Where did you get this delicious flesh?' The snake told her all the circumstances; whereupon his mate said, 'It is only right that you should thank the person who has done you such a kindness, and become his servant.' Accordingly the serpent, having assumed the form of a human being, went to the prince and said, 'My name is Khālīs; ¹ I am anxious to enter your honour's service.' The prince assented to his proposition.

"The frog, too, on being rescued from the serpent's teeth repaired, all weltering in his blood, to *his* mate, and told her all that had happened. Having heard his story, she, likewise, said to him, 'Now, you go and enter that benevolent gentleman's service.' Accordingly the frog, also, having taken the form of a man, went to the prince and said, 'My name is Mukhlīs.² I desire to remain with you in the capacity of a servant.' The prince readily took *him also* into his service. Thereafter they all three set out from that spot and arrived in a certain city. The prince then went to the king of the place, and said to him, 'So great is my prowess that I can fight single-handed with a hundred men: if you give me a thousand rupees a day, I will continue in your Majesty's ser-

¹ Which means "pure, or sincere."

² *i.e.*, "devoted."

vice, and whatever at any time you may commission me to perform, I will assuredly accomplish it, however hard.' The king accordingly accepted of his services, and fixed his salary at one thousand rupees per diem. The prince, on receiving his thousand rupees, used to spend one hundred rupees himself, two hundred he gave to his two companions, and the remainder he piously distributed in the way of alms to the poor.

"One day the king went out a-fishing. By accident his ring happened to fall into the river, and though the most careful search was made for it, it was not recovered. The king then said to the prince, 'Get my ring up out of the river.' The prince thereupon said to his companions, 'The king has made this request. They replied, 'What a hard work is this the king has enjoined you to perform!' But Mukhlis immediately added, 'This is quite in my way, so I'll manage it for you.' Thereupon Mukhlis, having re-assumed the form of a frog, dived into the river and brought up the ring. The prince then took it to the king, who on receiving it from his hands, expressed his gratitude in the kindest terms.

"Some days after, the king's daughter was bitten by a snake. The physicians had recourse to ever so many remedies, but all to no avail. The king then

said to the prince, “ *You must cure my daughter.*” He was in the utmost dismay, and said to himself this is no business of mine.¹ Khālīs shrewdly conjectured the cause of the prince’s concern, and said to him, ‘Bring the girl to me, and shut us both up in a closet. By the grace of God, I shall effect her cure.’ Accordingly the prince brought her to him, and having seated them both in a secluded apartment, left them there together. Khālīs then applied his mouth to the serpent’s wound, and sucked out all the poison, and immediately the girl was cured. The king was so delighted with the prince that he gave him his daughter in marriage, and appointed him the successor to his throne.

“After a while, Khālīs and Mukhlīs both said to the prince, ‘We wish to take leave of you now. ‘Why,’ asked the prince, ‘should you wish to leave my service at this time?’ Khālīs replied, ‘I am that serpent to whom your highness gave a piece of your own flesh to eat.’ And Mukhlīs added, ‘And I am that frog whom your highness rescued from the serpent’s mouth. We are both in hopes that we may now each return to his own home.’ The prince accordingly gave them both their desired discharge.”

Having thus finished his story, the parrot said to

¹ Or, “This is beyond my power,” *lit.*, “This is not my work.”

Khojista, "Well, now, be off, and do not delay." His mistress, on hearing this, was about to leave, and to enjoy, as she hoped, her lover's embraces; but just then it dawned and the cock crew. Her visit was, therefore, again deferred for that day too. Then she burst into tears, and repeated these lines:—

"Be dimmed, my eyes, and filled with tears;

In grief like mine, 'tis only meet:

Send me—no salve so fit appears—

Some dust, my love, from off thy feet!"¹

¹ *Lit.*, "Please become dim, [my] two eyes! and remain full of water (tears). For the sake of a collyrium, please send [me] a little [of thy] foot-dust."

TALE XXII.

THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER THAT WAS LOST.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista again repaired to the parrot to ask his leave, and sat herself down beside him, filled with anxious thoughts. The parrot observing her in this dejected state, said, "My lady, why are you so concerned to-night?"

'Tis sad to see thee thus o'erwhelmed with care;
This grief of thine is more than I can bear.'¹

For God's sake, my lady, be not grieved about *any* thing, nor let anxiety of any kind possess your soul.²

Why should thy youth with care be troubled so?
Woe, *only* woe, and never-ending woe!''³

¹ *Lit.*, "To see thee thus is not agreeable. The power of [enduring] this trouble is not to me."

² *Lit.*, "and do not bring any anxiety upon your soul."

³ *Lit.*, "This is thy [time of] youth. Is there such grief to you? 'Tis vexation (or oppression) 'tis vexation, 'tis vexation, vexation!"

When Khojista heard this effusion¹ of the parrot's, she then repeated the following lines :—

“What shall I say ?—I've nothing got to say ;
Be silent then ?—I cannot silent be !
Without my love, I never *can* be gay,²
And yet no chance of meeting him I see.”³

She then went on to say, “Parrot, since last night, I have been anxiously considering whether my lover is learned or unlearned, wise or foolish. If he be clever, it is well for me to cultivate his affection. But if he be stupid, then it will be best to keep aloof from him. For to be enamoured with a fool is just like being an enemy to one's own life,⁴ or rather, it is like dying before one's appointed time.” The parrot replied, “Khojista, you go and tell him the story of ‘The Merchant's Daughter who was Lost,’ and thus test his wisdom and intelligence. If he gives a proper reply to the question you afterwards put to him, then you may conclude that he is a wise fellow ; but if other-

¹ *Lit.*, “purport, or meaning.”

² Or, “My life is thrown away.”

³ *Lit.*, “Shall I (or, what shall I) speak ? Nothing is said. Shall I remain silent ? There is no remaining silent. Without meeting him, I cannot get on (or, prosper). And if I would meet him, then there is no meeting [with him].”

⁴ Or “soul.” In next clause, *kaṣa*, or *ḥisnat*, is to be understood. *Lit.*, “rather [as if] one should die without [fate (or destiny)] having come.” Forbes, in his *Vocab.*, gives *ā*, *ī*, as “the same as *ajal*, the predestinated time of death.” But if he had any authority for this, or it be a mere conjecture of his own, is questionable. We have not been able to find it, as a noun, in any *other* Dictionary but his.

wise, you may put him down as a fool." Khojista asked, "What is that story? Tell it me." The parrot then proceeded as follows:—

"There was once in Cābul a very wealthy merchant, who had a most lovely daughter, whose name was Zuhra. All the grandees of the city were enamoured of her, but she declined the addresses of them all, and used to say to her father, 'The only person I will marry must be wise and accomplished, or else an artist¹ of incomparable skill and talent.'

"This remark of hers was reported in every city and town. Now it so happened that in a certain district, there were three young men, who for skill and intelligence, excelled all their contemporaries.—Well, those three men went to Cābul, and said to the merchant, 'Sir, if your daughter wishes for a clever and skilful husband, here are we three, who really have not one equal in the world as men of skill.' Then one of them said, 'My peculiar talent consists in this, that if anything be lost, I can tell *what* it is, and describe exactly the place *where* it is.' The second then said, 'I can form a horse out of wood, and make it fly quicker than Solomon's throne could.' The third said, I am such an archer, that whoever gets a

¹ Or "man of science."

taste of my arrow will never raise his head again from the ground.’¹ After hearing what each had to say for himself, the merchant went to his daughter, and thus addressed her, ‘My dear, three young men have come here to-day of such wonderful skill and talent! What say you now?’ Having heard the description he then gave her of their respective abilities, she thus replied, ‘Father, dear, I will turn it over in my mind and give you an answer to-morrow, and accept one or other of the men.’

“Having so said, she left her home during the night and secreted herself,² so that in the morning her father could nowhere find her, though he sought for her ever so much. ‘God only knows where she has gone’ [said he].³ He then went to the man who had said that he knew all particulars about anything that was lost, and inquired of him, saying, ‘Tell me truly, where has my daughter gone to, and where is she?’

“Having heard the merchant’s appeal to him, the man took time to reflect, and at the end of an hour⁴

¹ *Lit.*, “Whoever eats the fruit of my arrow, leaving the field will never go out.”

² *Lit.*, “She herself became lost.”

³ *Lit.*, “God knows where she went.”

⁴ More literally, “one *ghari*, or twenty-four minutes.”

said, 'A fairy has taken her away to the top of a certain mountain, where no one can go, nor can any-one bring information about her.' Then the father, addressing the second young man, said, 'You make a wooden horse [such as you described] and give it to the third man (the archer), so that, mounted on that horse, he may go and kill that fairy with an arrow, and, having seated my daughter behind him, may bring her back to me.'

"The result was, that this suitor, having made a wooden horse, gave it to the archer, who, seated thereon, repaired to the mountain; and, having mortally wounded the fairy with a single arrow, brought back the merchant's daughter.

"Then, all three, being alike enamoured of the damsel, began to quarrel with one another, each desiring to marry her."

The parrot, on reaching this point in his story, said to Khojista, "Having recounted this tale to your lover, ask him to which of the three young men she ought to be given, and who, he thinks, got her. If he give a proper reply, then you may know that he is sensible; but, if not, then conclude that he is unworthy of you and worthless."

Khojista answered, “*You* tell me, first, who had the best right to her and got her; and then, I will be the better able to judge as to the shrewdness of his reply.” The parrot rejoined, “To him she properly belonged who, having killed the fairy, carried the damsel off with him. For the other two had, indeed, displayed their skill, but *he* had risked his life, in going to so dangerous a spot, and taking her away from thence.”

The parrot having thus concluded the story, said to his mistress, “Now, Khojista, be off and join your beloved, for

‘The days of youth—the happiest known to men—
When once they’re gone, can ne’er return again;
Nor is there bliss like that which lovers find,
When heart communes with heart, and mind with mind.’”¹

Khojista, on hearing these lines, was about to go and throw her arms round the neck of her rosy-cheeked [lover], but just then it dawned and the cock crew, so her visit was again deferred. She then burst into tears, while she sobbed forth the following stanza:—

¹ *Lit.*, “Where [is to be met with] again this season of youth? where? Regard as a precious boon the society of friends.”

“ Õ that thou could'st, within mine eye,
Concealed beneath mine eyelids lie,
And thus be ever nigh !
That so none other might I see—
My sight pre-occupied with thee—
Nor other thou than me ! ”¹

Lit., “ Come thou inside my eyes ; let me cover [thee with my] eyelids ;
Let me neither see any one else, nor permit thee to see [any
other]. ”

TALE XXIII.

THE BRAHMAN WHO WAS IN LOVE WITH RAY BABUL'S DAUGHTER.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista went again to the parrot to obtain his leave, and thus addressed him :—"O sage adviser of what is good, and faithful guardian of [my] honour ! you had better to-day give me leave quickly. [As the poet says :]—

‘Haste, boy ! the news that I am sick convey ;
I cannot bear my love’s prolonged delay.’¹

And if not, then tell me plainly your objections, so that I may submissively remain at home while I repeat these lines, [so appropriate to my case :]

‘Fly off, companion bulbuls,² quickly fly,
And warble, nestling, ’mid the roses fair ;

¹ *Lit.*, “Cup-bearer ! convey quickly the news of my intoxication (*i.e.*, love-sickness.) The power of waiting [longer] remains not to me.”

² The mother *bulbul* (or Indian nightingale) is supposed thus to address her young ones, or her companions, on being herself caught in a fowler’s

Whilst, snared by cruel fowlers, wretched I
 Give way to lamentation and despair.
 I call to mind those joys, which once were mine—
 Now gone for ever!—and in grief repine.'

The parrot replied, "Khojista, I give you leave every night, but you never go. What a strange destiny is yours, that never seems to befriend you! You had better make haste to-day and go to your beloved, and have an affectionate meeting with him; but keep in mind this piece of advice which I give you, viz., "Whatever work or enterprise you undertake, do it in such a way, that no calamity in consequence befall you, but that, on the contrary, you may reap some benefit; just as in the case of the Brahman who fell in love with Rā'e Bābul's' daughter, and, by a certain expedient, obtained the object of

net. *Literally*, "Go, O nightingales! embrace the rose! Through the hand (or oppression) of this fowler, I sit lamenting (*i.e.*, give up in despair) the flower garden (*i.e.* there is no chance for *me* now.)"

¹ Or, "the Rā'e Bābul's." We have some doubts as to the proper rendering of *Rā'e Bābul*; whether to regard "Bābul" as the Rā'e's *own* name, or that of his kingdom. It is the Arabic and Persian word for the city or kingdom of Babylon—but "Rā'e (or Rāy) is a *Hindū* title of royalty = Rājā—of which it seems a mere contraction or corruption, the letters corresponding to our j and y (or i) being interchangeable in the East as in the West, *e.g.*, *jogī*, or *yogī*; *Ἰωάννης*, Yuhanna, John. It is now, also, a mere family name or title, as Rām Mohan Rāy, Rāy Nārāyan Dās, &c. The *Rāy Bābul* of our tale, however, seems to have been a king. In the English translation of Mohammad Kādri's Persian abridgement of the *Tuli Nāma*, "Rā'e Bābul" is rendered, "the king of Babylon."

his affections, and also lots of cash and property, and escaped all the traps set for him.¹

'Skill's the condition of success,
In every work and deed :
For, even in one of wickedness,
Wit's needed, to succeed.'"²

Khojista asked him to tell her the story, and the parrot accordingly proceeded to do so as follows :—

“Once upon a time, there was a handsome and intelligent Brahman, who, having in the course of Providence been induced to leave his own native city, went into the dominions of Rāy Bābul. One day, having entered a certain garden there, he was admiring the flowers and blossoms. And, by chance, at the very same time, the daughter of Rāe Bābul was taking a walk in that garden, and looking at the beautiful display of tulips and white roses. It so happened that the Brahman caught sight of the lovely damsel,³ and, she too observing the handsome⁴ Brahman, they mutually exchanged glances. Thereupon, youthful passion displayed its power, and the flame of

¹ *Lit.*, “Was not snared in anything.”

² *Lit.*, “Dexterity is a condition in every affair. Even to commit a fault (*faux pas*), art (or skill) is requisite.”

³ *Lit.*, “Moon-foreheaded one.”

⁴ *Lit.*, “Sun-faced.”

carnal desire kindled up the fire of love in the breasts of both. In a word,

'Love made them captives both to be ;
Her prisoner he—his bondmaid she.'¹

"After three or four hours [of loving interview] they both went home. He went crazy, and she fell sick. Subsequently, [on his partial recovery,] the Brahman repaired to a necromancer, and falling at his feet, repeated these stanzas :—

'Distressed and sorely grieved am I ;
A deep heart-wound received have I ;
But—now I've met with thee—
From all my woes relieved am I ;
And here I'd always be!'²

"Having accordingly attached himself to this magician, so faithfully did he serve him, that the latter, seeing his devotedness, became quite ashamed, and one day affectionately asked him, 'My poor distracted friend, do you only want [your devotion] to be tested? or have you any worldly object in view, in

¹ *Lit.*, "They both became love's prisoners; he her captive, she his slave."

² *Lit.*, "Griefs have been endured [by me], wounds received. [My] heart has suffered severe blows. Now I will not leave thy feet [which] with great labour I have reached." The rhythm of our version is in imitation of that of the original.

serving me so faithfully? Whatever you may require, I shall, poor man as I am, gladly enable you to obtain.' On hearing these words, the Brahman, assuming a suppliant position, recounted to him his whole story. Whereupon the magician said, 'I thought you would ask of me a mine of gold, or make some such request as even *I* could not fulfil. But what great matter is it, to bring about a union between one person and another?' Having thus spoken, he, that very hour, having prepared a magic talisman, gave it to the Brahman, and said to him, 'If a man keep this charm in his mouth, then he will pass for a woman; and, if a woman do so, then she will assume the appearance of a man.'

"A day or two after this conversation had passed, the necromancer, having taken the form of the Brahman, and the Brahman that of a Brahmanee, they repaired together to Rā'e Bābul, and the former thus addressed him: 'Please Your Majesty,¹ I am a Brahman. My son having become insane, has gone away—no one knows where. This is his wife. If you will kindly give her accommodation in your house for two or three days, I will meanwhile go in search of my son.' To this proposition Rāe Bābul readily assented, and set apart a room in his own palace for

¹ *Lit.*, "May victory attend the Great King!"

the Brahmin^e's residence. Then, having given the Brahman magician some provisions for his journey, he dismissed him on his errand of love. Afterwards, he put the (supposed) Brahmanee in the same apartment with his own daughter. See how¹ the necromancer by this device managed to get the Brahman beside his sweetheart! while he himself, having obtained some money, returned to his own home.

"Well, the princess took a great liking for the young Brahmanee. One day, the latter thus addressed Her Highness, 'My lady, I notice that your complexion is becoming paler and paler every day, and that your eyes are constantly suffused with tears: to all appearance, you are not well.'² 'Tell me the truth, now: have not you lost your heart to some one?''³ The princess wished to conceal the fact of her case, but the Brahman adroitly said to her, 'I am certain you are in love with some one. If you will only confide to me your secret, I will do my best for the fulfilment of your desires.' Then, the young lady made a full confession, as follows:—'I am dying of love for a certain young Brahman, and grieving about him is bringing to an end the days of my youth.' The disguised Brahman then said, 'Tell me truly; would you recognise that Brahman if you saw him?'

¹ *Lit.*, "Do you see how?"

² *Lit.*, "A condition like that of sick persons has been formed."

³ *Lit.*, "Have you fixed your heart on any one?"

She replied, 'Certainly, I should know him again, were I to see him.' Thereupon the Brahman spat out the charin from his mouth, when instantly he regained his original appearance. The princess recognised him at once, and, throwing her arms round him, pressed him to her bosom, and was filled with ecstatic delight.

"Some days after [this joyful disclosure], they consulted together [about an elopement], saying, 'It is not good to remain here. Far better to go to some other country, where we can live together without fear [or danger of discovery.]' Having so determined, Rā'e Bābul's daughter secretly extracted from her father's treasury a lot of jewels and gold coins; and leaving the house at dead of night, along with the Brahman, they set out together for a distant province. After some days they arrived in the city of a certain king, and, having erected a fine mansion just outside the bazaar, took up their abode there, and began to enjoy their heart's desires to the utmost, without any fear. If ever, in the course of loving converse, they took a fancy to the reading or recitation of poetry, then such verses as the following would be repeated by both :¹—

'Our morn is spent in quaffing wine;
Together we, at night, recline;
Our future lot God only knows,
But smoothly all at present goes.'²

¹ *Lit.*, "Each one would repeat this couplet."

² *Lit.*, "The morning passes away with the goblet. The night passes"

“When the father of the princess saw that the two had disappeared, he was exceedingly grieved. In spite of diligent search, no traces of them could he find, inasmuch as they had left their native land and gone to another country.”

The parrot, having finished his story, said, “My lady, be off with you now quickly, and dispel the sorrows of your heart in company with your lover!” His mistress, on hearing this, was just about to go, and enjoy the pleasures of life along with him, when it dawned and the cock crew. Her visit was again deferred. She gave expression to her feelings by a flood of tears, and the repetition of the following lines :—

“We shall escape from every grief,
Whene’er we draw our latest breath :
Our life, at longest, is but brief ;
We both must, some time, sleep in death.”¹

with my sweetheart. Information of the future God knows. *Now* [the time] passes in repose.”

¹ *Lit.*, “We shall escape from the grief of every moment, if anywhere our breath goes forth. This life is dust (earth), if you anywhere (or, anyhow, or at any time) and if I anywhere [die.]”

TALE XXIV

THE SON OF RAY BABUL FALLS IN LOVE WITH A CERTAIN
DAMSEL.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista repaired to the parrot to take leave, and thus addressed him, "I want to go to my lover, and ascertain first of all about his cleverness. Should I find him clever, then I will encourage and return his affection; but if otherwise, then I will have nothing to do with him, but wait patiently till I meet with one more worthy of my regard. For the wise have said that there are three characters with whom, if possible, you ought not to be very intimate, and on whose [professed] friendship one ought not to place much confidence, viz., first, women; secondly, children; and thirdly, fools. It is a common saying, "that the hatred of a wise enemy, is better than the love of a foolish friend."

The parrot replied, "My lady, what you say is quite true; so the best thing you can do is to recount to your lover a certain tale to-night, and then to ask his opinion on a point connected therewith. If his reply be to your mind, then consider him wise and intelligent, but if he do not give a proper reply, then put him down as a fool."

Khojista asked, "What is the story you propose that I should tell him and ask his opinion about?"

The parrot commenced his tale as follows:—

"Once on a time, the son of Rā, e Bābul had gone to do pūja at a certain temple.¹ There he saw a certain young damsel, whose loveliness surpassed all the powers of description. Marvellous, indeed, was the beauty which God had bestowed upon her. Praised be his name! her face would put to shame the full moon itself, while the darkness of her tresses would cause Night [through envy] to shed a flood of tears. Were the loftiest cypress-tree to see her stature, it would fall to the ground from jealousy. And what partridge ever exhibited so elegant a gait?²

¹ This seems to support our considering Bābul as a cognomen of Rā, e, or the Rā, e (i.e., king). It is not likely that a king of Babylon would be represented as doing pūjā in a *būtkhāna* (idol-temple), especially when it is added afterwards that it was frequented by Brahmans.

² *Lit.*, "Where did the *kabak* ever obtain her style of walking?" The *kabak* is an Indian bird of the quail or partridge kind, proverbially admired (along with the goose!) for its elegant gait.

" Her style of head-dress was a *stunning* sight !
 Her stature something *awful* for its height.
 Her every glance was like a deadly dart,
 That pierced right through her lover's smitten heart.
 A lovelier face no fairy e'er displayed ;
 Nor e'er was finer form by sculptor made."¹

" [In plain prose] the young man became at once [desperately] enamoured with her, and the pangs of love allowed his heart no rest. Falling headlong at the feet of the idol, he uttered, in desperation, this fanatic vow : that, if ever he should get married to the lovely damsel, he would cut off his own head, and present it as a thank-offering at the idol's feet.

¹ In these lines we meet with three difficulties, 1st., the ascertaining the true reading of the original ; 2nd., the rendering them into intelligible and yet literal (or *nearly* literal) prose ; and 3rd., the putting them into English verse, without departing too far from the literal sense of the Oriental bombast. Taking the reading of the text in both Dr. Gilchrist's and Dr. Forbes's editions, the literal rendering would be, "the tie (or putting on) of [her] clothes is rage (or oppression). [Her] lofty stature is a calamity (more literally, 'the resurrection'). Tyranny [her] look. [She is] fairy-faced. [Her] body has been cast in a mould." Mr. J. T. Platts, however, (whom we have consulted on the passage,) thinks that, instead of *jore* ("clothes"), the right reading is *jüre* (a "top-knot,"), *jürä* meaning the same as *khompä*, i.e., "the hair of the head braided, or tied up, on the top (or hinder part) of the head." The first line he would accordingly translate, "The tying up of her top-knot" (*jüre ki bandish*), or more freely, "the dressing of her hair" (or "the way it is done up") "is something terrible" (or "ravishing," or "overpowering"). "Her erect (or lofty) figure is a calamity [for men]." This reading and rendering we have adopted in our metrical version, though we think that Forbes's reading—if retained—might be rendered, "the elegance of her attire," or "the style of her dress." The "stunning sight" (in our 1st line) is rather *slangish*, but is so near the original that we could not resist the temptation to use it.

“ Having thus vowed, he thereupon went home, and sent this message to the girl’s father, viz., ‘ Please to take me into your service, and to give me your daughter in marriage. [Surprising to say,] the father, the very same hour that he heard this message, [not only gave his ready consent, but] had the marriage service [at once] performed, and also the ceremony of conveying the bride to the bridegroom’s house, according to the customs of the country.¹ After which the two began to live together [as happily] as a pair of lovers.² Sometimes she would enjoy herself with him at her [father’s] house, and sometimes he would repose along with her at his own abode.

“ In this manner one month passed smoothly away. [At its conclusion] it so happened that, one day when the young woman was at her father-in-law’s house, her parents sent for her and her husband.³ So the young man taking his [happy] bride with him, sat out for their house; and a certain Brahman, an old acquaintance and companion of his own, accompanied them, keeping rather in the rear.

“ When the young man reached the temple in which he had first seen the lovely maiden, he at once recog-

¹ *Lit.*, “according to his own customs (or rites).”

² *Lit.*, “after the manner of lover and mistress.”

³ *Lit.*, “bridegroom.”

nised it ; and the vow which he had made also came to his recollection. So, entering the temple alone, in order to fulfil his engagement, he cut off his own head and laid it at the idol's feet.

“ How many—reputation to secure—
Pleasures renounce, and life itself abjure ! ”¹

“ After a minute or so, the Brahman also entered the temple, when, to his amazement, he sees Rā, Bābul's son lying a corpse, with his head disseyered from the trunk. On observing what had happened, he was afraid, and said to himself, ‘ If now I shall go away from this alive, people will conclude that the young man has been murdered by me, inasmuch as no other person has been in the place since he entered it but myself.’ Well, after much anxious deliberation, he came to this determination, viz., that it was best for *him, too*, to cut off his head, and offer it up [as a sacrifice] at the feet of the idol. Accordingly, he also decapitated himself, falling down thereupon, at the idol's feet.

“ An hour after, that young woman, also, on entering the temple, was astonished to observe the two men both lying dead, and began to say to herself, ‘ Alas ! alas ! these two men are both lying with their

¹ *Lit.*, “ For the sake of their name men go (*i.e.*, die). Pleasure they lose, life they abandon.”

heads cut off, weltering in blood. What a fearful affair !' So saying, she was about to cut off her own head too, and embracing the corpse of her husband, to become a *sattī*,¹ but just then a voice issued forth from the shrine, saying, ' Young woman, join the heads to the trunks of these two decapitated men, and then, through the mercy of Rām, they will both come to life again.'

"On hearing this she was delighted ; but in her hurry to obey the oracle, she put the head of her husband on the Brahman's body, and the Brahman's head on her husband's trunk. Immediately both came to life again and stood up before the young woman. Then a dispute arose between the head of Rāje Bābul and the Brahman's body. The head said, 'This is *my* wife ;' the trunk said, ' She is *my* spouse.' "

'The parrot having thus concluded his story, said to Khojista, " If you wish to test the shrewdness of your lover, then ask him whether the woman in these circumstance belongs properly to the head or to the trunk ? " Khojista said, "Tell me, first, parrot, *yourself*, which is her rightful owner ? " The parrot re-

¹ Probably no English reader almost, (in these days), need be told what "sutteeism" is. The *original* meaning of the word *sattī* (fem. of *sat*), is "true," "faithful," "chaste;" but it usually designates "a virtuous wife, who on the death of her (only) husband, is voluntarily burned alive on his corpse," or has her life put an end to (as here) in any other way.

plied, " Her legitimate proprietor is the head, inasmuch as *it* is the seat of knowledge and ruler of the body."

Khojista having heard the conclusion of this tale from the mouth of the parrot, determined to set out to meet her lover ; but just then it dawned and the cock crew. Her departure was, therefore, again prevented. She burst into tears, and repeated these lines :—

" Again, O dawn, thou bitter foe of mine !

Thou'st brought my hopes of meeting to an end.

The joys of New Year's Day I'd e'en resign,

For one night's loving converse with my friend." ¹

¹ *Lit.*, "For a night of meeting, O morning of separation! even a New Year's Day is a [meet] sacrifice."

TALE XXV.

OF THE WOMAN WHO WENT TO THE MARKET TO PURCHASE SUGAR,
AND HAD AN INTRIGUE WITH A SHOPKEEPER THERE.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista again went to the parrot to take leave of him, and thus addressed him, "O parrot! this is what I am afraid of and feel quite ashamed about, namely, that when I meet with my lover, and he is angry with me for my long delay, I don't know what excuse to make." The parrot replied, "My mistress, don't be concerned about that, inasmuch as you women can easily make up stories, and are up to all sorts of deceptions. It is wonderful what stratagems they think of, and how ready-witted they are. I have heard from their own lips many of their excuses and have been greatly pleased with them. Are you so simple and inexpe-

rienced as not to know the famous rhyme-proverb?"¹

' A woman, if e'er she designs such a feat,
An elephant under a stool will secrete ;
No hairs on the palm of the hand e'er appear,
But *she*, if she wishes, will mustard there rear.'

"Are you anxious about such trifling matters as what you have referred to? Have you no intelligence? Wait a moment, keep up your spirits, my lady; cheer up! Just wait a little, and I will tell you what trickery and cunning a certain woman made use of towards her husband. Khojista asked him to tell her the story. So the parrot thus proceeded:—

"Once upon a time a certain person gave some money to his wife to purchase sugar with. So she repaired to the market to procure the sugar at the shop of a certain dealer. This man, as soon as he saw her, fell in love with her. The woman having bought a seer (2 lbs.) of sugar, tied it up in a corner of her

¹ *Lit.*, "as not to know anything. How fine! There is a celebrated proverb" [viz.] &c.

² *Lit.*, "If a woman be put to her wits, she will conceal an elephant under a small stool. On the palm of the hand when do hairs ever grow? [But] if *she* wills it, she will cause mustard seed to germinate thereon." This meaning of *jamānā*, is omitted both in Forbes's Vocabulary and in Shakespeare's Dictionary, though the latter gives the intransitive verb *jamnā*, "to grow, or germinate."

chadar.¹ While she was doing so, the shopkeeper began to make love to her, and speak kind things, at which she was greatly pleased. After a good deal of flirtation, he invited the woman into his house; and she, having put down her *chadar* (with the sugar tied up in its corner) in his shop, accordingly went in with him. His head assistant² then dexterously—during their absence—opened the bundle, abstracted the sugar, and tied up instead of it an equal quantity of sand!

“After a while, the woman came out of the *banya*’s house, and hastily taking up the *chadar*, set out for home. On arriving there she fearlessly went up to her husband, and put down the bundle before him. He, on opening the bundle, perceived at once that its contents consisted of *sand* instead of sugar. Amazed at the sight, he said to his wife, ‘What buffoonery is this you are practising on me? I sent you for sugar and you have brought sand!’ On hearing these words, she without a moment’s reflection replied:—

“If sand for sugar oft I bring,
My spirit soon its flight will wing.”³

¹ A long sheet (or slip of cotton cloth) which, wound round the body, forms the outer apparel of Hindū women. It is usual to improvise a bag or pocket by tying up money, or even bulky articles, in a corner of the *chadar*.

² The Persian word *gumāshṭā* means primarily one who is “commissioned” for any work; hence a deputy, agent, factor, or head-manager.

³ *Lit.*, “If in *this* very way I go on bringing sugar, then, one day, I shall depart from life itself.” A most poetic effusion! as well as what follows.

Her husband being much put out, asked her, 'What's the reason, wife, that you appear so confused and disconcerted to-day?'

"Why have you sand for sugar brought?
And *crying*, too, you seem! for what?"¹

Then she, smiling, replied, 'My dear, what shall I say? Just after I left the house, an ox ran bellowing after me. Frightened for him I took to flight, Then, unnerved by the sudden shock, I stumbled and fell; and the coppers, too, fell out of my hands. From shame, on account of the people looking on, I could not look for them. So taking up this sand, I brought it away. The money, no doubt, is among it; you take it out. Meanwhile, as I am excessively tired and exhausted, I will go and lie down for a while.' On hearing this, her husband threw his arms around her neck, and kissing her again and again said, 'If this is the way they fell, then they fell by mishap. Why did you trouble yourself to lift up and bring the *sand*? ' The short of the matter is, that by the woman's giving so ready an answer to her spouse, he, suspecting nothing, was not in the least angry with her, but on the contrary, began to show her all sorts of sympathy and attention."

The parrot having thus finished his story, said to

¹ *Lit.*, "Instead of sugar, why hast thou brought sand? Why hast thou assumed this weeping-like appearance?"

Khojista, "What great affair was this? You could do better still. You have nothing to fear. Come, my lady, make haste and go and embrace your lover. Should he be angry with you, no doubt you will there and then think of a reasonable excuse for your delay." With these flattering assurances of the parrot, Khojista was comforted. Thrusting her feet—glittering with jewels—into her gilded slippers, she was on the point of rising; but just then the cock crew, and it dawned, so that her visit was again deferred. She burst into tears while she repeated these lines:—

"On what blest night shall I my Adonis' meet?
Each morning to my project brings defeat."²

¹ *Nigār* properly means a picture or portrait; 2nd., a very beautiful woman, a mistress. But here Khojista applies the word to her lover, so I too have accommodated it.

² *Lit.*, "On what night will the meeting of [my] lovely mistress take place? Every morning is the enemy of my *affaire* [*d'amour*].

TALE XXVI.

OF THE KING WHO DECLINED THE DAUGHTER OF A CERTAIN
MERCHANT, AND DIED OF GRIEF IN CONSEQUENCE.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, assuming the air of one very modest and bashful, went to the parrot and thus addressed him, "My confidential friend, I am devotedly attached to you. Wise men have said that 'a woman that lacks modesty is not respected among people of any class or nation, and such a woman is regarded as bad by all chaste persons.' I wish, therefore, now to remain patiently at home. I won't take up with any strange man, nor go to anyone's house.

· Shall I from home and husband fly,
A stranger to embrace?
A modest wife would sooner die,
Than her fair name disgrace.' "¹

¹ *Lit.*, "Shall I go out from home for the sake of searching for a stranger? People give their lives for the sake of their honour."

The parrot replied, "Khojista, the truth is that I have never yet seen so wise and sensible a woman as you; what you now say is quite correct.

' Those eyes alone we ought to praise
Which modesty display;
Where *vice and venom's* in the gaze,
Of what good use are they.'¹

There is one thing to be feared, however, viz., that if you stay away or delay it may shorten your days, as in the case of the king in the story." Khojista asked him to repeat it to her, so the parrot thus commenced:—

"In a certain city there once lived a very wealthy and eminent merchant, who kept a large number of horses and elephants. He had a most lovely and handsome daughter.

' On face so fair the moon, dismayed,
Would look with jealous eyes;
Of form so fine were painting made,
'Twould fill you with surprise.'²

¹ *Lit.*, "That eye (those eyes) let us praise in which eyes there is modesty. Those which are bad and full of poison, of what use are they?"

² *Lit.*, "That portrait (*i.e.*, lovely face, or beauty) [was such as] seeing which the moon would receive a wound (*i.e.*, be mortified). That form [was

The fame of her beauty had spread to every country, and every one was anxious to set eyes upon her.¹ The number of her suitors was countless,² but her father, through pride, would accept of none of them. Meanwhile she was approaching to womanhood,³ and "the palm-tree⁴ of youth was beginning to yield the fruits of felicity" [or, in plain English, she was getting ripe (and anxious) for the joys of matrimony], her breasts having already assumed a considerable degree of rotundity. Observing this, her father repaired to the court of the king of that country, and presented a petition to the following effect, 'Your slave [who now addresses your majesty]⁵ has a daughter so sweet-spoken, that her conversation excites the envy of the *būlbūl-i-hazār*,⁶ and whose gait inspires the jealousy of the *kabak-i-kohsār* (or mountain partridge). Birds descend from the sky in order to listen to her talk,

such] that a picture would be astonished."—A very obscure and far-fetched figure of speech—meaning perhaps that a "picture" of her (or any other) lovely form, would be put to confusion (lost in amazement) if confronted with the incomparable original. Our version is necessarily rather free.

¹ *Lit.*, "The eye of every person that had not seen her was [desirous] of seeing her." The word *mushtāk* is understood after the word *dekhnekū* in the sentence.

² *Lit.*, "Every one wished this, that his marriage should be with her."

³ *Lit.*, "The season of prime had arrived near."

⁴ Or, "tender plant."

⁵ *Lit.*, "This slave."

⁶ *i.e.*, "Nightingale of a thousand" [tales], (or "one of a thousand") the name of a class of this bird greatly esteemed on account of its fine voice.

and become fascinated.¹ Whoever hears her speak, faints away [overcome by charm of her voice]. [Your petitioner] hopes that your majesty will accept of her [for your harem], and that she may enter your highness's service, for which she is every way well be-fitted.² Thus will your Majesty's slave acquire still greater repute among his own people, and his status be raised.'

"When the king had read this petition he was greatly delighted, and began to say to himself, 'When a man's destiny is propitious, then everything [he can desire] comes to him of its own accord.' So saying, he beckoned to his four viziers, and told them to go to the merchant's house and see his daughter. 'Find out,' he said, 'accurately all about her, and if she be worthy of being introduced into the royal family,'³ then quickly bring me word.'

"In compliance with his Majesty's instructions, these four ministers accordingly went to the merchant's residence. Immediately on seeing the young woman, they all become enamoured of her, and consulted to-

¹ *Lit.*, "intoxicated."

² *Lit.*, "and may become engaged in the service of maid-servants (or slaves), for she is worthy of the presence (i.e., of his majesty)."

³ Or (more literally) "worthy of his exalted majesty."

gether, saying, 'Should the king see this lovely creature he will assuredly go mad. Day and night he will remain with her, and pay no attention to the affairs of the kingdom. The consequence will be that everything will go to wreck and ruin, and there will be a stop put to the right government of the country. We had better not praise her to him, nor advise him to take the girl.'

"Having thus determined among themselves, they went back to the king, and thus gave in their report. 'Your majesty, the report which has reached you of the beauty of the young woman is unfounded. There are many female slaves in the royal palace much better [looking, better in every way] than she.' The king, on hearing this, said, 'Well, if she is such as you represent, then I have no desire to marry her and bring on myself, unavoidably,¹ misery in consequence. The result was that the king declined the merchant's daughter, and the disappointed father returning home gave his daughter in marriage to the *Kotwāl* (police magistrate) of the city.

"One day that young woman said to herself, 'So beautiful and handsome as I am, it is a wonderful thing the king did not accept of me. Please God, I

shall one of these days exhibit myself to him.' Well, it so happened soon after, that the king being one day on his way to take a walk in a garden, passed by the residence of the Kotwāl. [Seeing his approach] the young woman hastily ascended to the top of the house, and displayed to his majesty her surpassing beauty. Immediately on seeing her he fell in love with her, and turning to his viziers he repeated, in a rage, this couplet :—

‘ In enmity, even, none would do,
What has in friendship, been done’ by you.’

What is the reason that you told me a lie?’ Then they replied, ‘ Please your majesty, your guilty servants on that occasion on consulting together, came to this conclusion, that should the king once see this lovely girl, then, in his passion for her, he will become negligent of his duties to his country. The kingdom will in consequence fall to the ground,² and its subjects be utterly ruined.’ The king was pleased with this excuse of theirs, and forgave their misconduct. It is a well-known proverb, ‘ By words you may get an elephant, and by words you may be trodden under its feet.’³ But afterwards the king became seriously

¹ *Lit.*, “shewn,” or “represented.” Our version is, otherwise, quite literal.

² *Lit.*, “be mixed with the dust.”

³ A pun upon *hālhi* pā,e (“one may obtain an elephant”) and *hālhi*

ill on account of his passion for the young woman, and in his grief gave utterance to these lines :—

“ This love-sick message please to send.
Should any one go near my friend ;
‘ Say on what night thou’lt visit me—
Many’s the day I’ve looked for thee.’ ”¹

The king’s ministers were then daily anticipating his death² [so, as a last resource,] they made the following proposition to him. ‘ Your majesty ought to take the young woman from the Kotwāl, and refresh your self with the sherbet of her company and embraces. If he send her to your highness willingly, all well. But if not, then take her from him by force.’ The king replied, ‘ I am sovereign of this country, [it is true ;] nevertheless, I will never be guilty of such conduct, which would be altogether inconsistent with regal justice ; and for kings to practice such tyranny and oppression towards their servants and subjects would be highly improper. Or for them thus to exhibit their despotic power, would be out-and-out.

pāñon (or *pā,ñon*, “ an elephant’s feet ”). Gilchrist’s reading of the text, viz., *Bāñon* (sup. *se*) *hāthi pā,se*, aur *bāñon* (*se*) *hāthi pā,se* (sup. *ke nīche*) seems preferable to that of Forbes—viz., *Bāñon hāthi pā,se*, aur *bāñon hāthi pāñon*.

¹ *Lit.*, “ Tell this message of grief, if any one passes by my friend’s (i.e., sweetheart’s) abode. ‘ On what night wilt thou come and meet with me? Many days have passed in expectation.’ ”

² *Lit.*, “ considered that on any day he will (may) depart from life.”

injustice. Besides, "whoever oppresses will himself come to grief and ruin."

"No tyrant e'er to flourish hath been seen;
How can a field of swords be clad in green?"¹

In fact, I [am resolved always to] act² according to this couplet:—

"Sooner my life itself will I resign
Than from the path of rectitude decline."³

"The sequel of the story is, [in short,] that from excessive grief on account of the girl, [and disappointed affection] the king [soon after] ended his days."

The parrot having thus finished his tale, said to Khojista, "To exercise self-restraint in your circumstances is not desirable; if you, too, do so, it will, one of these days, be the death of you, just as in the case of the king, and no good will result from it. Therefore you had better go and meet your lover.

¹ *Lit.*, "Whoever is a tyrant will never flourish. Did you ever (or anywhere) see a field of swords verdant?" This evident "*bait*" (couplet) is printed in Forbes's text as prose, perhaps from the two *lines* (in Gilchrist's text) not *rhyming*. This, however, they would do, if the arrangement of the last three words were altered from *kahīn shamsher kā* to *shamsher kā kahīn*, the *true* reading, we conjecture.

² Or, "for the present I shall act."

³ *Lit.*, "To lose my life is an easy (or trifling) thing, comparatively. But I will not give justice out of my hand." This "*bait*" also, is printed as prose by Forbes. It does not *rhyme* in the Hindustānī text.

“Go, quaff the wine of joyous intercourse,
And drown therein all grief and all remorse.”¹

Khojista on hearing this was about to go to him ; but just then the cock crew and morning dawned. Her visit was again deferred ; she burst into tears and sobbed forth these lines :—

“This day—predicted in my horoscope—
Alas ! has robbed me of my night of hope,”²

¹ *Lit.*, “Gladly drink the wine of union. Forget the grief of religion and of the world.”

² *Lit.*, “What a day is this which heaven shows me ! It tears me away from the night of hope.”

TALE XXVII.

OF THE POTTER WHOM THE KING TOOK INTO HIS SERVICE AND
SUBSEQUENTLY MADE COMMANDER OF HIS FORCES.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, sighing and weeping, her eyes suffused with tears and her heart filled with grief, repaired to the parrot once more to take leave of him, and thus addressed him, "I have heard, parrot, that a certain poor Arab once went to a rich man, and said, 'I am going to the Ka'aba.'¹ He replied, 'Very good, don't delay, make your way there quickly.' The Arab responded, 'I have no means to defray my expenses on the road.'

¹ The *Ka'aba*, (from *ka'ab*, "a cube," and hence, primarily, "any square building") is the name specially of the famous square temple of the Muham-medans at Mecca; built, as they pretend, by Abraham and his son Ishmael, on the site of a still more ancient temple built by Seth and destroyed at the deluge. This, and the temple at Medina, are the chief objects of pilgrimage among Musalmans. A mere sight of the *Ka'aba* is reckoned as meritorious as a year's devotion at any other temple.

‘If you have no money,’ said the rich man, ‘then don’t go. I have the authority of the Korān in saying that “if anyone is in indigent circumstances, then it is not incumbent on him to make a pilgrimage to the *Ka’aba*, so that, *nolens volens*, he should involve himself in difficulties by going to Mecca.” God has not said to the *poor* man, “Go to Mecca.”’ ‘I have come to you,’ rejoined the Arab, ‘to ask you for some money, not to ask for the solution of a problem (or point of casuistry) that you should quote the Korān to me.’ [Well, in like manner,] I come to you, parrot, every night, to take leave of you merely; and you keep bawling out to me profitless tittle-tattle about this place and that. I don’t come to you to listen to advice. Such talk as you have hitherto been obtruding upon me will only make me angry with you.”

The parrot, thinking that she might perhaps kill him as she had done the mina, was greatly afraid, and so assuming the language of a flatterer, commenced by repeating the lines :—

“My destiny doth wond’rous seem to me,
That thou with me shouldst, causeless, angry be ;

¹ *It.*, “to encompass,” or “make the circuit of.” The pilgrim has to perform the *tawaf* (or *tawf*, i.e., circumambulation) of the *Ka’aba* seven times, each circuit being accompanied by certain prayers, and the kissing of two sacred stones—one black, the other white—probably *œrolites*.

Intemperate 'tis to lose thy temper so,
Thy want of temper causeth me much woe.'

"Khojista," he proceeded, "don't be annoyed at my advice, and do not take it ill, inasmuch as whoever accepts the wise counsel of another, will find that counsel to be useful to him both in this world and the next."

"Parrot," replied his mistress, "I listen to whatever you say, but to-night it is very dark, and I am afraid to go alone. If you tell me, then, I will take my slave with me, and have a meeting with my expectant lover." The parrot on hearing these words, struck his breast with his wings in great commotion, and said, "For God's sake, never do so! Beware of ever taking your slave with you. Wise men have said, 'a menial is never trustworthy; that class of people are generally mean-spirited and stupid.' From your making such a foolish proposition, I suspect you have never heard the story of the potter." Khojista asked him to repeat it to her, and he accordingly proceeded to do so.

"One day," said he, "a certain potter, having

¹ *Lit.*, "Wonderful is fate and my destiny, that thou art angry with me without a cause. What injustice it is that thou art angry!—thy wrath is a great calamity," (or "what a calamity it is that thou," &c., "thy wrath is great injustice.") The last line is a sort of play on the various meanings of the word *ghazab*—feebly imitated (as regards the *jingle*) in our version.

drunk too much wine, was very intoxicated. Falling upon the flagons and jugs, and other drinking vessels, he lay rolling about among them; the consequence was that they were all broken in pieces and he covered with wounds. In course of time, after he had recovered from his drunken bout, the wounds healed up, but they left scars which might readily be mistaken for arrow-wounds and sword cuts. It so happened that the city where he resided was visited by a famine. He, therefore, left it and went to another, where he forthwith began to look out for employment. The king of that city happening to see him, and noticing the scars on his body imagined that he, no doubt, was an old soldier, who had received so many wounds in the course of his service.

“So thinking, the king—without making any particular inquiries—gave him employment at once, and speedy promotion therein; for he said to himself, ‘this is no doubt a brave fellow, who has got his body thus covered with wounds.’ In course of time an enemy invaded that king’s territory, and began to plunder the villages of the district. His majesty thereupon made this man commander of his army, intending to send him to fight with the enemy. Hearing of this, the poor potter was in great terror, and actually fell ill in consequence.

“[Not so ill, however, but that he was able to have an audience with the king, so, appearing] before his majesty, with joined hands, he thus addressed him, ‘Please your highness, I am a potter by caste; I cannot engage, therefore, in the occupation of a soldier. It is a well-known proverb, “What does an oilman know of the value of musk?”’

“On hearing this, the king laughed. He felt quite ashamed of the mistake he had made, and dispatched another person, as commander, against the foe.”

“The parrot having concluded his story, said to Khojista, “My advice to you is not to take a slave with you. His help won’t tend to your welfare [or good name,] but will only add to your dishonour. If you go, then go alone.”

Khojista on hearing this, determined to pay her visit unattended, and enjoy the highest pleasure that life can afford¹ in company with her lover; but just then the dawn of day appeared and the cock crew: so her visit was put a stop to for that night too. She again burst into tears, and sobbed forth these lines:—

¹ *Lit.*, “The delight of existence.”

"The *night* of separation and the *day*
Alternately appear, and pass away.
I long for ev'n that I may meet my friend,
But dawn arrives before I've gained my end."¹

¹ *Lit.*, "The day [and] night of separation go off together. Neither is my desire [granted] to me by the morning, nor [is there] any benefit to me from the night."

TALE XXVIII.

OF THE TIGRESS WHICH REARED A YOUNG JACKAL ALONG WITH
HER OWN WHELPS.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, dressed in male apparel, furnished with military weapons, and with a turban fancifully arranged,¹ repaired to the parrot, to take leave of him. He, on perceiving her thus foppishly arranged, laughed outright, and said, "Bravo, Khojista! you have done well, on such a dark night as this to put on male attire, and come alone, unaccompanied by a slave. Capitally done!"² God be praised, my lady! that your mother gave you birth. 'The fact is, I am ready

¹ More literally, "Having fastened on a rakish ('swell,' or irregularly folded) turban."

² *Lit.*, "What a fine thing you have done!" The meaning and construction of the subsequent clause are rather ambiguous. It might, perhaps, be rendered, "Were thy mother to give birth to *thee only*, the truth is that it" (i.e., her having no other children) "would be a sacrificial requital for this cleverness of thine." One genius is better than a dozen dolts.

to die for this cleverness of yours ; for a certain parrot, an old friend of mine, happening to fly past, and seeing me in this cage, alighted, and sat down beside me. He then told me the following story, which very much resembles the tale I recounted to you last night. And [as] you have acted just in accordance with it, it is quite certain that now no harm will befall you.” Khojista requested him to tell it her—so the parrot thus began :—

“Once upon a time, a tiger and his mate resided along with their cubs in a certain jungle. It so happened one day that the male tiger having become raving mad from hunger,¹ went forth into the desert in search of prey. After suffering many hardships and encountering much difficulty to no purpose, he at last turned his steps homeward, in despair. He had not proceeded far, however, when, all of a sudden, he saw lying in his road a tiny little jackal’s cub, whose eyes were still closed, and evidently only about two or three days old, but yelping piteously. The tiger was delighted at finding it, and, lifting it up, took it home

¹ There seems to be a misprint (or false reading) in both Gilchrist’s and Forbes’s text here. The former has *baukhlāyā*, the latter, *bo khilāyā*. *Baukhlāna* is not in any dictionary we have consulted ; and *bo* (or *bu*) *khi-lānā* “to cause to eat (or feed with) smell,” “on account of hunger,” is pure nonsense. The true reading, no doubt, is that suggested to us by our friend Syed Abdoollah, viz., *bhukhlāyā*, a common word, he tells us, (though not in Shakespeare,) meaning, “to become hunger-mad.”

to his mate, and said to her, 'I am a male; if I don't^{*} eat anything for two or three days more even, still I can stand it out, and it will matter nothing. But you are a female; if you fast for another day, then by evening you will be dead. For this reason, I have brought home this young animal; you eat it, and give milk to the cubs.' She replied, '[Your remarks and proposition are] becoming a male;' but though I have before me two tiny little cubs, yet, how can I have the heart to eat this young thing, and then suckle them?'

"Ere to another's babe you suffering cause,
Touch with a mother's hand your breast—and pause!"¹

'And besides, you are a male and have a hard heart, and yet *you* even cannot bring yourself to eat the little thing. I am a soft-hearted female; how could *I* do so? With your consent I will bring up this poor little orphan as my own child.' The tiger replied, 'Very good.' Accordingly, the tigress reared the young foundling along with her own cubs.

"In course of time, all three grew to full size, and the young tigers looked upon the young jackal

¹ *Lit.*, "Just thus is befitting a male."

² *Lit.*, "To the womb(*i.e.*, offspring) of any one, do not give fire (*i.e.*, pain) Placing your hand on your own bosom, look (*i.e.*, consider)."

as their eldest brother. They used to play together as brothers, and, according to their ability, would hunt for prey in the jungle together. One day it so happened that they went out in a certain direction in search of prey, when, all at once, they saw an elephant at a particular spot. The two young tigers sprang upon him without hesitation, but the jackal, shrinking back through fear, took to flight and concealed himself under a tree. The former, on seeing their [supposed] big brother taking to his heels, themselves did so also. On reaching their home, all together, they told their mother what had happened. She, on hearing their account, laughed, and said to them, 'This is a young jackal, how can he display any bravery, or contend with an elephant?'

'Did ever crow the gait attain

Of *kabak* elegant?

What hand but Yours would ere have slain

That murd'rous elephant?'

The parrot, having finished his story, said to Khojista, "Rise now, and be off to your lover, and share the pleasures of life in his society!" His mistress, on hearing this, was about to set out to embrace her

¹ *Lit.*, "When, my son, did a crow attain to the gait of a *kabak*? (Indian partridge). Who, besides you, would slay a wicked, blood-drinking elephant?"

beloved, but just then the true dawn of day¹ appeared, and the cock crew, so her visit was again deferred. She burst into tears, and repeated these lines :—

“ Each dawn compels my heart forlorn
To vent its griefs in tears ;
A house of mourning, every morn,
My domicile appears.”²

¹ The *ṣubḥ-i-ṣādiq*, or “true dawn,” is that which immediately precedes the rising of the sun.

² *Lit.*, “The dawn constantly causes this heart to shed copious showers of tears ; so that there is plenteous weeping in a house of mourning in the morning.”

TALE XXIX.

OF THE NOBLEMAN WHO CONCEALED A SNAKE IN HIS SLEEVE,
AND REPENTED OF HIS FOLLY.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, with her collar torn,¹ in a state of distressing bewilderment—her eyes filled with tears and her head uncovered—repaired to the parrot to take leave of him, and thus addressed him, “O faithful friend and confidant of one who is thoroughly heart-broken :—

‘ My heart is burning with intense desire :

Ah ! who hath kindled in my breast this fire ?”²

“O parrot ! *you* are consuming my heart with the fire of separation from *him*, and my liver keeps coming

¹ A Persian phrase, expressive of great excitement from anger or grief, answering nearly to the Jewish “rending the garments.”

² *Lit.*, “[My] heart is burning with the fire of love. Alas ! who has kindled this fire ?”

into my mouth.¹ It has become like roasted meat.² Know assuredly that *to-day* I will on no account stay at home, but will certainly, [whether you will it or no,]³ go to my lover; [so you had better] give me leave quickly."

The parrot, alarmed, said to himself, "God preserve us! It is quite certain that she will now by no means be kept at home, for her impatience is now without bounds, and distressed as she is, she will not even listen to me." Thus thinking, and being almost at his wits' end, he said to her, "My lady, I give you leave every night, and I wish to God you would have your meeting with your lover, who alone can dissipate your griefs. It is you yourself who delay and do not go. I don't understand how it is that your destiny seems always adverse.⁴ Come now, in the name of God! delay not any longer—off with you, and embrace your beloved—only keep this in mind, never to trust an enemy, otherwise the like calamity will befall you that happened to the young nobleman, by reason of the snake." Khojista asked, "What is the story you refer to? tell it me." So the parrot thus began:—

¹ An orientalism, answering to our "chewing the cud of disappointment."

² *i.e.*, from the fire of disappointed desire acting on it.

³ *Lit.*, "*Nolens volens.*"

⁴ *Lit.*, "I do not know what sort of destiny yours is, which remains inimical."

“One day a certain nobleman, having gone to hunt in a forest, was surprised to see a black serpent, (that seemed to be fleeing in great consternation from some place,) come right up to him, and thus address him :— ‘O nobleman! for God’s sake give me some place where I may hide myself, and I will bless you for it!’ The *amīr* asked, ‘Why are you so alarmed? is there anything wrong?’¹ The snake replied, ‘My enemy is coming along, club in hand, to kill me. Do conceal me somehow!’ On hearing this, the *amīr* took compassion on the animal, and concealed it in his wide sleeve. After a while, the person referred to by the snake, came up, armed with a thick bamboo pole, and said, ‘A black serpent, fleeing before me, has just come in this direction. Tell me, if any of you have seen it. I will smash its head with this bamboo, and then make my way home.’ Upon this, the Amir said, ‘I have been standing here, friend, for a long while, but have seen nothing of the kind. God only knows where it has gone.’ Then the man made much search for the animal all round about, but, not finding it, set out for home.

“About an hour after, the *amīr* said to the snake, ‘Your enemy has gone, so now you go too!’ The serpent laughed, and replied, ‘My good sir, I won’t

¹ *Lit.*, “Is it then well?” i.e., I hope all is well—or, that nothing is wrong.

leave now without stinging you ! Do you think I am going to listen to you, and move off, without anyone being killed ?¹ Are you so ignorant about me as not to know that I am your natural enemy ? When I have killed² you, then I will go, but not before. You are evidently an egregious fool, to have taken compassion on me, and, believing what I told you, given me a place in your sleeve !' Then the Amīr said, 'Serpent, I have done a kindness to you, and you intend to requite it with evil ! This is very improper !' 'I have heard from wise men,' rejoined the snake, 'that to do good to the bad is just like doing harm to the good.' On hearing this, the man was greatly afraid, and said to himself, 'How shall I get him out of my sleeve, and preserve my life ?' After reflection, he determined on an expedient, and said to the animal, 'Black snake, there is another serpent coming ; you get out of my sleeve, and then you and I will both go and ask its opinion. If it approves of your design, then do with me as you like.' Finally, the snake agreed to his proposal, and, coming out of his sleeve, went towards the other snake. Whereupon the Amīr, seizing his opportunity, struck it such a blow on the

¹ Or, "struck," *i.e.*, stung. The idiom illustrated in the expression here, *be ko, ī māre*, is deserving of attention. *Be* is used adverbially ; hence *koī* in the nom. case : and *māre* is the inflected past part. indecl. (more fully, *māre hū, e*) with a passive signification. See Dowson's *Hindustani Grammar*, § 356.

² Or, "struck," or "stung," or "bitten."

head with a stone, as to kill it.¹ And thus he succeeded in getting safe home.”

Khojista having heard the story, said to the parrot, “I agree with what you say, and shall take your advice; but now you too consent to my proposal, and give me leave quickly.” The parrot replied, “Very good, now don’t delay, but go and meet your lover and enjoy yourselves.” His mistress, hearing this, was about to set out and embrace him, but just then the dawn appeared and the cock crew. Khojista reviled the cock, and said to the parrot, “Now it is morn, how can I go?” Finally, her visit was again deferred to another day. She then burst into tears, and repeated these lines :—

“O, bird of the morn, if I catch you to-day,
I will eat you uncooked, as a tiger its prey!”¹

¹ *Lit.*, “That it died.”

² *Lit.*, (2nd line) “I will then chew thy flesh, *raw*, with my teeth.”

TALE XXX.

OF THE SOLDIER AND THE GOLDSMITH, AND HOW THE LATTER
WAS KILLED ON ACCOUNT OF HIS WEALTH.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, having bathed and washed herself, and eaten a little fruit, made her appearance arrayed in satin drawers, fastened on with a belt of brocade, a fringed¹ *kurtā*,² a *kurti* (or chemisette) of lace bordered with brocade, a boddice (or spencer) of *banat*,³ and [over all] a Benares *dopatta*;⁴ her lips tinged with a line of

¹ Or "loose." In both Gilchrist's and Forbes's texts, we have *kākalyōn-dār*, a misprint perhaps for *kalyōn-dār*, which is given in Forbes's Vocabulary as meaning "loose, wide." Neither this word nor *kākālī* occurs in Shakespear's Dictionary. In Richardson's (Persian) Dictionary we have *kalyūn*, "a species of cloth of seven colours." But, if we retain the reading as we find it in both texts, then, as *Kākul* means "a lock of hair, curl," I conjecture the word here may mean fringe, as resembling such, taking *Kākuli* as a "a little curl, ringlet," and hence tassel, and in plur. *fringe*.

² A garment serving both as chemise and petticoat or skirt.

³ A sort of lace, with gold or silver spangles.

⁴ A sort of veil, or shawl, made of two breadths of linen (hence the name, lit., two-breadthed,) seamed together, worn loosely over the shoulders, chiefly (or, the best kind) being made at Benares.

missi,¹ her feet with *likhoṭā*,² her eyes touched with *surma*,³ and in her hair a magnificent comb; thus dressed and adorned, and decked moreover with much costly jewellery,—indeed, altogether so bride-like was her appearance, that fully to describe her dazzling magnificence is impossible; in the words of the poet—

“That comb so deftly stuck upon her head,
 Would make the Night with envy burst in twain;
 Her *dress* observe! one glance will make you dread
 Lest aught those lovely snow-white robes should stain.”⁴

Thus coquettishly attired, she arose and went to the parrot to take leave of him. “My beloved friend and confidant,” said she, “if you will to-day compassionate my condition and give me leave, then, as long as I live, so long shall I feel bowed down by the load of your kindness,⁵ for I have now such a sense of uneasiness in my side, that I feel altogether out of sorts [in the words of the poet]:—

“My eyes with tears are filled—my heart with grief;
 O God! what to this heart will bring relief?”

¹ A black powder or dye, see note p. 39.

² A red dye made from the betel nut

³ A sort of collyrium.

⁴ *Lit.*, “That comb [is] drawn so elegantly [through her hair] that from envy of it Night would split in two. Observe the purity of her dress! Sight is in consideration that it (the dress) may not get soiled (by merely being looked at!)” Can imagination surpass this piece of Oriental hyperbole? Our verse-rendering is unavoidably a little free.

⁵ *Lit.*, “I shall [not be able to] lift up my head from (*i.e.*, on account of) the load of thy kindness.”

From constant weeping, I can get no rest ;
 Who knows the hideous woe that rends my breast?"¹

"Bless you!" replied the parrot, "go your way, only bear this advice in mind, make friendship with whom you like, but never confide the secrets of your heart to any one, otherwise the matter will be sure to get wind and you will go to ruin; just as the goldsmith, who having told his affairs to his wife, met his death in consequence. *Khojista* asked him to inform her of the circumstances, so the parrot, accordingly, thus commenced his tale:—

"In a certain city there lived a very wealthy goldsmith, with whom a *sipāhī* ("sepoy") had formed a friendship, which being heartfelt on his part, he thought it also sincere on the part of the goldsmith. It so happened that the said *sipāhī* once found somewhere a bag full of *ashrafīs*.² Filled with delight, he opened it, and on counting the *ashrafīs* found them to amount to 250 in all. Forthwith he repaired to his friend the goldsmith in great glee, and said to him, "I have been most lucky to find, without any trouble or toil, such a sum of gold on the road." Ultimately he en-

¹ *Lit.*, "My eyes are not closed, my heart is troubled. O Lord! the desire of whom is [agitating] my distressed heart? These incessant lamentations do not allow me to draw a breath. What can any one know (i.e., who knows?) what ugly pain is in my heart?"

² A gold coin so called; see note 3, p. 60.

trusted the bag and its contents to the goldsmith, saying to him, 'Brother, allow me to deposit it with you, and when I require it, I will get it from you again.' Well, some time after, the soldier asked the goldsmith for his bag, upon which the fellow had the impudence to say to him, 'Is this the reason, forsooth, that you made friendship with me, that you might fasten a calumny upon me, and make me out a thief? *When* did you give me a bag? You tell a lie! A fine affair indeed! Be off with you, and fasten your accusation on some man of wealth, and by that means you may get something to your liking. Little did I think that you would become my enemy. Conjoining [and confounding] truth with falsehood you now want to rob me of my property. It reminds one of the well-known proverb, "Instead of the thief they punish the judge; the honest man dies weeping before the rogue."'

"The upshot was, that the poor *sipāhī* had no help for it but to go to the judge and make a complaint, which he accordingly did, recounting to him all the circumstances most minutely. The *kāzī* then asked him, 'Have you any witness to the charge?' He replied, 'No, your worship, I have no witnesses.' The judge shrewdly conjectured that, as the goldsmith's caste was generally up to all sorts of trickery, there would be no wonder if *this* goldsmith had acted dis-

honestly as stated. Acting on this conjecture, the Kāzī sent for the goldsmith and his wife, but much as he tried, by coaxing and persuasion, to get them to confess, they persisted in denying the charge. At last the judge said to them, 'I know for certain that you have made off with the bag, so, until you return it, I am determined I will not release you.' Having thus said he went home, and thereupon shut up two confidential *employés* in a chest which he had placed in a certain room. Then returning again into the court, he said to the goldsmith, 'If you do not consent to give the man back his gold, I shall have you put to death in the morning.' Having thus spoken, he shut them both up in the said room, and telling them that he would execute them next morning, after prayers, he retired to his private apartment. After midnight the wife said to her husband, 'If you really have taken the man's bag, then tell me where you have concealed it, otherwise my life, as well as the bag, will be [needlessly and irremediably] lost.'¹ The judge will never let us off without getting the bag.' The goldsmith thereupon told her that it was buried in a certain spot close by his bedstead. The two men in the box overheard this disclosure, and in

¹ *Lit.*, "along with the bag, our life too will go." But *hamārī* ("our") and *ham* ("we") are often used for the sing. ("my" and "I") as in English "you." She seems to think that *one* life (and that her husband's) must go anyhow. But, if she could not find the bag, she too would die (of starvation) very unnecessarily.

the morning, when the *kāzī* sent for all four into his court, and asked the two men what the other two had said to one another during the night, they swore that they had heard to the above effect. The judge, therefore, sent and got the bag from the place indicated, gave it to the *sipāhī*, and hanged¹ the goldsmith."

The parrot having finished his story, said to *Khojista*, "If the goldsmith had not told his affairs to his wife, he would not have been put to death. Well, now be off with you, and in company with your beloved, enjoy the delights of youthful passion." *Khojista* hearing this was about to pay her long-intended visit, and press her lover to her bosom; but just then it dawned and the cock crew. Again, therefore, was she prevented from going. She covered her face and burst into tears, giving vent to her feelings in these lines:—

"Never may God again that morning send,
That brings my night of meeting to an end!"²

¹ *Lit.*, "impaled."

² *Lit.*, "That morning by which [my] night of meeting is dismissed (i.e., brought to an end), may God never let me see."

TALE XXXI.

OF THE MERCHANT AND THE BRAHMAN, AND OF THE BRAHMANS
THAT WERE BEATEN BY A BARBER.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, having changed her dress and donned her jewels, again went to the parrot to take leave of him, and thus addressed him: "O parrot, I am wholly devoted to you, do have compassion on me and give me leave to go, for to-day I am again in distress, and my heart rent in pieces. [These lines of the poet¹ well describe my state]:"—

' *Whose lovely eyebrows, called to mind again,
Cause in her heart such fluttering and pain?
What sighs escape the love-sick maiden's heart!
As if by Fury's claws 'twere torn apart!*'²

¹ *Mirza Kātil.*

² *Lit.*, "At the remembrance of whose arched eyebrows does [my] heart flutter? To-day, the sigh of that [love-]sick one is something [like] a nail

"I wish to go to him at midnight, meanwhile, just tell me a very short story." The parrot said, ["Very well,] Khojista. In a certain city there once lived a very wealthy merchant, but, alas! he had no children. One day the following train of thoughts passed through his mind. 'Although,' said he to himself 'I have amassed countless wealth in this world, yet it is all to no purpose, inasmuch as I have no son to be the light of my house after me, and to take charge of my wealth, and also to keep up the name of his ancestors. Alas! alas! a hundred times, alas!

"No grief have I from any source but one,
No *greater* grief than not to have a son."¹

'Well now! in these circumstances, the best thing I can do is to spend during my own lifetime this fathomless ocean of wealth, in the name [and to the glory] of the Lord, by providing for the wants of the poor and needy, the orphans and destitute, and having become a fakir, by giving myself up entirely to the [worship and] contemplation of God.

"Poor's the distinction gained by mortal man,
To have it said, 'he filled life's narrow span!'

(or claw) in [her] heart." The lines primarily (or originally) referred probably to a *male* lover, but Khojista applies them to herself, and so, we too, in our version, change the sex.

¹ *Lit.*, "There is no grief to me from any quarter (*i.e.*, source)—except one—anguish for [the want of] progeny."

At death, the richest sepulchre, and best,
Is but a stone on his unconscious breast.¹”

“Having formed this resolution, he rent his collar, as a rose [-bud is rent, when it bursts into bloom], and forthwith made such a distribution of his money from morning to evening, that every poor man in the district became rich. He then seated himself on an old tattered mat, and, tightening his waistband, patiently endured the pangs of hunger and thirst. That very night, when drawing towards morning, he saw a wonderful dream. A person like a foreigner stood before him, who, on being asked who he was, thus replied:—‘I am the original form of your destiny. Since you have to-day piously given away all your money and goods in charity, and retained nothing for yourself, therefore, I have been sent to tell you that in the morning I will come to you in the form of a •Brahman. You must then beat me to death with clubs. As soon as the breath has left my body, it will all be turned into gold. Then, whatever limb you may choose to cut off, instead thereof another limb will instantly be produced; and thus you will become possessed of no end of gold.’ Having thus spoken, the personification of his destiny disappeared,

¹ *Lit.*, “To frail (or mortal) men, from the [mere] name of existence there is [only] disgrace. A sepulchral tablet, even, is [but] a stone (or heavy burden) on my breast.”

and immediately the star of morning shone forth. When the merchant opened his eyes, he saw nothing but himself and the old mat. He then said to himself, in astonishment at what he had witnessed in his sleep, 'O God! what a dream is this I have seen! What may be the meaning of it I know not, but the All Merciful God is the accomplisher of events; whatever He pleases He can bring to pass.' Whilst in this state of bewilderment, a barber, with his shaving bag and instruments under his arm passed that way. The merchant called him, and had his head shaved by him.

"A minute after, a Brahman came up to him, on which he remembered the dream of the previous night. Immediately he stopped the operation of head shaving, and set to beating the Brahman with clubs, continuing his blows till the poor man was dead. On falling to the ground, he became an image of pure gold.

"The merchant deposited the golden image in his house, and, giving some gold to the barber, charged him not to say anything about the affair to anyone. The latter was highly delighted that God should have made known to man such a valuable chemical *récipé* for making gold. Thrusting the gold under his arms,

he went, with all haste, home; and taking a very thick club in his hand, he seated himself at the door with this view, that, should any Brahman pass that way, he might kill him, and thus have gold made. Meanwhile, a company of Brahmans made their appearance, all of whom he invited into his house, and busied himself in entertaining them. After an hour or so, taking up a very thick club, he suddenly rushed upon them and began beating them with such violence, that their skulls were fractured, and they were all covered with blood. Then they all set up a loud outcry, shouting out, 'For God's sake come! or we shall be killed, every one of us, for no reason, by the hand of this barber.'

"Hearing this, the people of the neighbourhood ran together, and, securing the barber, carried him off handcuffed to the magistrate, whom they thus addressed:—'Look, your honour! now, at this very time, we are all likely to meet our deaths, seeing that, under your jurisdiction, barbers are actually murdering Brahmans.' The magistrate asked the barber, 'On account of what offence did you strike those poor men, and for what fault did you split their skulls?' He replied, 'Please your honour, I went this morning to perform the toilet of a certain merchant. Whilst so engaged, a Brahman came to him, in my presence. The merchant then struck him several times with a

club, and so killed him. As soon as he was dead, he became gold. So I concluded, that if anyone kill a Brahman with a club, he will be turned into gold; and accordingly, I struck those Brahmans with this covetous notion, that they would, perhaps, be made into gold. But, alas! not one of the Brahmans became gold, but, on the contrary, only a disturbance ensued. This has been my offence:—your honour may deal with me as you think proper.’ Then the judge, having sent for the merchant, said to him, ‘Hear what the barber says, and tell me if he states the truth. I have heard that you to day, having killed a Brahman, turned him into gold, and this hairdresser, too, having half-killed several Brahmans, was ready to murder them outright.’ The merchant replied, ‘Patron of slaves! This man is one of my servants. For some days past he has been going about like a madman, striking whomsoever he fancies to strike, and making an uproar throughout the whole city. But what have I to do with it? There is a well-known proverb, “The murderer’s neck should pay for his crime.”¹ Your honour is ruler, and may do whatever you think proper. For what reason should I kill anyone?’ The magistrate believed his statement, and, having soothed and comforted them all, dismissed them, and then punished the poor barber.”

¹ *Lit.*, “Whose is the blood, his is the neck.”

The parrot, having finished his story, said to Khojista, "If you are going, then go! for it is now getting late; but, if not, you had better go to-morrow, at the end of evening." His mistress, on hearing these words, was about to set out and meet her lover, but just then it dawned and the cock crew. Her visit was therefore again deferred. She then burst into tears, and repeated these lines:—

"Both night and day, what agony of heart
By lovers is endured, whilst kept apart!
Each night is spent in unavailing grief,
To which succeeding day brings no relief."¹

¹ *Lit.*, "A wonderful distress is [that] of the days and nights of separation. The nights pass in grief, and in the days also is sorrow."

TALE XXXII.

OF THE FROG, THE BEE, AND CRANE, WHICH, CONSORTING
TOGETHER, KILLED AN ELEPHANT.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista again went to the parrot to take leave of him, and said, "You are aware, parrot, of my state, how from day to day I am becoming weaker, and my complexion, from languor, becoming paler and paler. My heart is not set on any worldly thing, nor have I any desire to converse with anyone."

' Apart from thee, my love ! from grief,
Alas ! no respite I obtain ;
In tears alone I find relief,
While veiled and silent I remain !
How strange, that all should on the heart depend !
No heart—then even friendly words offend !'¹

¹ *Lit.*, "Without thee there is now, indeed, alas ! not the least relief from sorrow ; covering my face with my skirt [I have only] to remain [and]

The parrot replied, "Don't be so concerned, my lady! and don't allow your heart to give way to despondency! Look to God! for He is the great First Cause and Controller of Events. He will hearken to your prayer, and fulfil the desire of your heart.

"Despair" should be never the subject of converse;
 The point to discuss no believer should dare—
 If in the *Qurān* 'tis forbidden; for *one* verse
 Says plainly, "*Lā tuknītu*"—"never despair."¹

"I am now doing my utmost to forward your designs. Why is it that you thus waste your youthful energies? and wherefore are your eyes continually filled with tears? I will assuredly procure a meeting between you and your friend." "Beloved one!" responded *Khøjista*, "it is astonishing that whilst we both, with perfect unanimity, use our every endeavour, nevertheless, the thing we have in view is never accomplished. What can be the design of God? and how adverse must my destiny be, that, day and night, everything seems to go against me!"² Alas, alas, that

to weep for whole watches [with] not a word [spoken.] What is the reason that everything depends on the heart? If there be no heart, then even a word [or, conversation] is oppressive (or, an infliction.)"

¹ *Lit.*, "Never converse [on the subject] of hope, [discussing] if there be in the *Qurān*, '*Lā tuknītu*' (despair not.)" The words occur in the *Qurān*, chap. 39, verse 54.

² *Lit.*, "That, all eight watches, it (*i.e.*, my destiny) continues averted (or

it should be so!" "Khojista," replied the parrot, "what difficulty is there in this case? have you not heard how a frog, a bee, and a bird, having united together, killed an elephant, notwithstanding that it is the terror of all animals? and what great affair is this, that it should not be accomplishable by you and me? God willing, the time is near at hand when you will meet your lover and be made happy." Khojista, on hearing this, said, "Your words are to me like sugar and butter.¹ May God keep you in constant glee, for having comforted my heart with such words! But what is the story you refer to? do tell it me."

The parrot then proceeded to say:—"In a certain city there was a tree, with very thick boughs, in which a pair of *shakkarkhorās*² had made their nest, and used to deposit their eggs. It so happened that a furious elephant found its way to that spot, and began to rub its back against the tree; which, being shaken by the violent friction, the eggs fell down.

"Then the *shakkarkhorā*, through fright, left his mate, and, alighting on another tree, gave vent to bitter lamentations.³ There is a well-known proverb,

turned against me.)" The student should notice that *naʿīb* here (as generally, but not always) is construed as a *plural*; as we say, "Fate, or the Fates."

¹ *Lit.*, "In your mouth are (*ghī*) clarified butter and sugar."

² Or *shakkar-khūras*; *lit.*, "Sugar-caters," a sort of Indian bird.

³ *Lit.*, "Began to sigh and weep."

'What can a mouse do in the presence of a cat?'¹ but he (the bird) kept saying to himself, 'Somehow or other, I must have my revenge on this tyrannical foe.' Having made this resolve, he went, forthwith, to a friend of his, a bird called *darāznōk*² and told him all that had happened, saying, 'An elephant has inflicted upon me most unjustifiable injury; devise some plan by which he may be killed, and I may have my revenge on him. Help me to get my requital, for "a friend in need is a friend indeed."'³ The *darāznok* replied; 'Good brother, the killing of an elephant is a difficult job; for me to do it alone is out of my power; but there is a bee, whom I consider a most devoted friend, and who is very much wiser than I am. Let us consult him, and act as he may advise. Accordingly, they both made their way to the bee, and acquainted him with all the facts. Having heard the circumstances, his compassion was moved, and he said to them, 'For a long while past I have been going about exerting myself to the utmost on behalf of my friends; but there is a certain frog, with whom I am on the best and most familiar terms, and who is at the head of his race's army; to him let us recount the facts of

¹ *Lit.*, "What [effort, or device] of a mouse can succeed before a cat?"

² That is, "Long-beak," probably, a sort of crane, or heron. Forbes, in his Vocabulary, says it is another name for the *shakkar khūrā*; but this is evidently a mistake.

³ *Lit.*, "Friends indeed (or true friends) are of use on the occasion happening" [when they *can* be of use.]

the case, and according as *he* may advise let us act ; for his devices never fail.

“Thereupon, by one mode or other, they all three found their way to the said frog ; and having laid before him all the facts in minute detail, requested his assistance. Then the frog was moved with compassion for the *shakkarkhorā* and the breakage of his eggs, and said, ‘Take comfort, *shakkarkhorā*, such a device for killing the elephant has just presented itself to my mind as is sure to be successful, whatever difficulties may stand in the way,¹ and what is *he* that it should fail in this case ?² Come, then ; my plan is this : first let the bee go up to him and intoxicate him by its ravishing hum ; when senselessly intoxicated, then let the *darāznok* peck out its eyes with its beak, so that the light of day¹ may become darkness in his eyes ; next—after the lapse of some days—when he has become exceedingly distressed by reason of thirst, I will begin to croak before him, and he will conclude that where a frog is croaking there assuredly there must be water. Under this impression he will most probably advance forwards, and I will then retreat backwards, and in this way will gently entice him on, till at last I

¹ *Lit.*, “by means of which they make low (*i.e.*, level, or remove) a mountain.”

² *Lit.*, “What thing is *he* ?”

³ *Lit.*, “of this world.”

bring him to, and cause him to fall into, such a deep pit that, whatever noise he may make, none will be able to hear it, and to the day of resurrection he will never be able to get out again, but, bewailing his plight with piteous sobs, will finally die of hunger there.'

"The upshot was that they all agreed to the proposal of the frog, and in that manner accomplished the elephant's destruction."

The parrot having brought down the story thus far, said, "Khojista, those two or three weak animals, by exerting their respective energies, killed such an elephant and obtained their revenge; then why heave these cold desponding sighs? Let us two likewise exert our powers, and then how is it possible we should not succeed in obtaining our object? Have you not heard the common sayings, 'Energy is sure of success,'¹ and 'He who seeks shall find'? Cheer up, my lady! Go *now* and have your meeting with him." Khojista, on hearing this, was just on the point of setting out, that she might enjoy his embraces, when it dawned and the cock crew; so her visit was thus postponed that day too. She

¹ Or (more literally) "gets its ends."

sobbed aloud, while these lines proceeded from her tongue :—

“ My heart ! the dawn’s unfriendly spite
Keeps evening ever out of sight.”

¹ *Lit.*, “ From this hostility of the dawn, O heart, evening being is not visible.”

TALE XXXIII.

THE KING OF CHINA, IN A DREAM, FALLS IN LOVE WITH A
TURKISH PRINCESS, AND SUBSEQUENTLY MARRIES HER.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, her eyes red, her complexion pale, her lips blue, her hair disshevelled, her collar torn, her clothes soiled, all dignity discarded, and sighing heavily—presenting, [in a word,] every appearance of one overwhelmed with grief—repaired to the parrot once more, to take leave of him, and thus addressed him, “O parrot, I have often heard it said by great authorities, that a person once asked a certain sage, ‘What is love?’ to which he replied, ‘They call Love the Angel of Death, and those who know best consider it an overwhelming¹ calamity.

“ He whose heart love’s tortures rend,
Soon his days on earth will end.” *

¹ *Lit.*, “sudden.”

² *Lit.*, “Whom love persecutes, that wretch is going out of this world.”

And that wretch [of a tyrant (Love)] has brought *my* state, too, to such a plight as is known only to myself.¹ Now I am determined to get rid of him, and to remain patient, according to the well-known proverb, 'A plague on that gold [ear-ring] by which one's ear is broken.'² The parrot replied, "There is a great difference, *Khojista*, between saying and doing. What is this you are now saying? What has a lover to do with patience? and to a sick person when is there any relief from sighing and weeping?"

'To him whose heart by Love's shafts hath been torn,
E'en life itself's a burden to be borne.'³

If a lover could remain [contentedly] without his mistress, then no one would ever die for another; and so the princess [in the story] would not marry because for a long while she was disgusted even with the *name* of man; but at last, she could not endure to live *without* a husband, and accordingly was married. *Khojista* inquired what was the story referred to; so the parrot proceeded to tell it her, as follows:—

"Once on a time there was a very mighty king of

¹ *Lit.*, "that my soul alone knows."

² *Lit.*, "May the gold fall into the kiln (or oven)," &c. This proverb is applied to a relation whose conduct renders him a burden, or source of vexation to his friends. It is also applied to wealth acquired by much labour, or the acquisition of which has produced distress.

³ *Lit.*, "To whom the arrow-piercing of love hath been, to him life in this world becomes a burden."

China, who had a most sagacious prime minister. It so happened that he was one day sound asleep in his palace, when his wazīr, having some matter of great importance to consult him about, took it upon him to go and awake his majesty. The latter, starting up, seized a sword and ran after the wazīr, who fled from him and concealed himself in some one's house. The king, filled with rage, then went and sat down on his throne, where, stroking his whiskers, striking his hands on his knees, and tearing his neckcloth in his ungovernable passion, he made a terrific uproar.

"His [other]• ministers,¹ respectfully addressing him said, 'Asylum of the world! what has happened to your majesty? Your house-born slaves are utterly at a loss. And of what crime has he (the wazīr) been guilty, which has occasioned such annoyance to the *kibla*² of the world? Let some explanation (or instructions) be [vouchsafed to us], that³ we may ourselves beware of the like misconduct, and do our utmost to show our loyalty."⁴

"Then the king took compassion on them, and

¹ *Lit.*, "The pillars of the state."

² *i.e.*, point towards which all turn in prayer and adoration. See note 3, p. 27.

³ Forbes's text reads (*kuchh irshād*) *hotā ki*. We prefer Gilchrist's *ho tāki*.

⁴ *Lit.*, "May bind up our loins to fidelity."

thus responded, ' My brethren, during the sleep [from which I have just been awaked] I dreamt that I had gone into a certain country, and was having loving converse with a princess of the land. Sometimes she would kiss my hands, and sometimes I would lay my head at her feet. * * * [Whilst in this state of rapturous enjoyment]¹ that wretch of a wazīr came and rudely² woke me up, and disgusted me with life.' On hearing these words, the courtiers respectfully inquired what like the said princess was? Whereupon the king, heaving a sigh, repeated the following lines :—

" From thoughts that snare and drive me mad,
 God rescue me, and make me glad—
 From bondage free !
 But ask me not of my Shirīn,
 The sweet-mouthed princess I have seen,
 No more to see !
 Some fond Farhād she yet may find,
 In Love's and Wedlock's chains to bind,
 But never me ! " ³

" It so happened that one of those ministers was acquainted with the art of painting. So, in accord-

¹ *Lit.*, " meanwhile."

² *Lit.*, " *nolens volens*."

³ *Lit.*, " From anxious thought (or dependence on others) freeing me, make me glad. O God, now make me free ! Ask not anything of my sweet-mouthed one" (a play upon "*Shirīn*" [sweet] the mistress of *Farhād* in a famous Eastern tale). " Whomsoever she pleases she can make her *Farhād*."

ance with the command [and the description] of the king, he painted a [full length] portrait of the princess [seen in the dream], and then went and sat himself down by a thoroughfare. Whatever traveller from a distant country in any direction, happened to pass that way, this wazīr would ask him if he had ever seen a woman resembling the said portrait, or heard of one answering to it; but no one said he had.¹

“After a considerable while, however, it so happened that a certain pilgrim made his appearance, who came and sat down beside the wazīr, and began to take some refreshment. On the minister showing him the portrait, and saying, ‘Fakīr, tell me truly, have you ever seen a woman like this?’ the holy man replied, ‘My good sir, I am well acquainted with [the original]. It is the Princess of Turkey.’² Notwithstanding her beauty, she to this day has never taken a husband, but gets angry at the very mention of a man.’

“The wazīr then inquired for what reason she had never settled in life. ‘All the circumstances,’ an-

¹ *Lit.*, “[If] thou hast seen, &c., then inform me, or hast heard, then tell me; but no one gave him a reply,”—[i.e., in the affirmative].

² The name Rūm has very diverse, or wide, significations. It means either the city or empire of Rome, Greece, Anatolia, Roum (or Erzeroum), Roumelia (or Asia Minor), or (as probably in our story, and more usually with Persian writers), the Turkish Empire generally.

swered the fakīr 'are well known to me. The reason is this. On one occasion, the princess, while seated in a summer-house, was contemplating the beautiful garden around her. On a certain tree in that garden a pair of peacocks had deposited their eggs, and were conjointly hatching them. Meanwhile such a fire broke out in that flower-garden, that the whole of the trees and flowers were burned up, and that tree also caught fire. When the male bird could no longer endure the burning heat, the helpless creature, abandoning his mate, flew off from the nest. The female bird called to him, 'O peacock! do not leave me at such a time! If you won't remain from love to me, won't you have compassion on these [our helpless progeny]?' Notwithstanding this piteous appeal, he minded her not, but flew away. The peahen, however, through attachment [to her offspring], did not rise from the eggs, and was there burned to ashes. The princess, since the day that she witnessed this perfidious conduct of the male bird—from that day till now—never utters the name of man, refuses to marry, and vows she will never take the name of man on her lips.'

"The wazīr, on hearing this narrative, was highly delighted, and proceeding forthwith to the king, thus addressed him, 'Sire! [in reference to] the

princess¹ whom your majesty saw in a dream, and whose portrait I painted on paper, [I have some important information to give. In accordance with your highness's instructions,] I went and sat down at the end of a road; and whoever passed that way, in either direction, to him I showed the picture, and asked him if he recognised it. At length, to-day, a fakir arrived from somewhere, to whom I exhibited the portrait, immediately on seeing which, he said, "Why, that is the likeness of the daughter of the King of Turkey."

"At these tidings the king was greatly delighted, and said to the wazir, 'Send this very day a man to Constantinople, and make proposals on my behalf for the hand of that princess.' The minister replied, 'But, please your majesty, she has resolved not to marry.' 'What is the meaning of that?' asked the king, 'I don't understand.' The wazir then recounted in his majesty's presence the story of the peacock, exactly as he had heard it from the fakir. On hearing the recital, the king asked, 'Well, what is to be done?' 'If your highness gives the command,' replied the wazir, 'I will go and show to the princess

¹ This sentence in the original is an *anacolouthon*, but it may be made both logical and grammatical (according to Urdū idiom) by simply removing the word "*aur*" after *dekhā ihā*. I have been obliged, however, to patch (or trim) up the long and awkward sentence in my English version, to make it more readable and *comme il faut* to our ideas.

your majesty's portrait; and in the same way as you became enamoured at seeing her form in your dream, so, it is evident, she too may become enamoured on seeing yours.' The upshot was that the wazir took his leave of his illustrious majesty, and on arriving in that country (Turkey), soon distinguished himself as an artist. Information was conveyed to the princess that a painter of unparalleled talent had come to the city; one the like of whom had never been ever seen or heard of. Thereupon the princess said, 'Bring him to me, that he may paint some pictures and views in our palace; and I shall leave it to himself to exhibit his art, and whatever subjects he chooses to paint.'

"The result was that the wazir went to her palace, and painted therein a picture of his own sovereign, along with his hunting grounds. The princess, on seeing the pictures, and paintings, and portraits, was astonished, and said, 'Whose portrait is this? and whose palace is here represented?' 'Princess,' said the wazir, 'this is the portrait of the King of China, and this hunting ground is an exact representation of his park, and this bird, and this stag, and this fawn, are simply the counterparts of animals there found. One day the said king, while sitting in his balcony, was surveying the desert around, when all at once there came *such* a deluge! It so happened that a pair of stags were just then sitting under a tree, along

with their fawns. On seeing the coming deluge, the roe, fearing for her own life, left the hart along with the fawns, and took to flight, like an animal devoid of all compassion. The hart called after her, 'This is no time for perfidy. O do not abandon me! have pity at least on these young ones of ours, and do not turn your face away from them!' Nevertheless the roe would not listen to his words, but scampered off who knows where? while the hart, through parental affection, would not leave his fawns, and, at last, was drowned along with them in the deluge.

"O princess! from the day when the king saw this meanness and hard-heartedness of the female, he has [not only] abstained from marriage, but shuns with abhorrence the very *name*¹ of woman.'

"The princess on hearing this story of the Emperor of China, thought it just the counterpart of her own, and said 'O artist! his circumstances and mine are just alike; for I witnessed the want of compassion of the peacock, and on that account would have nothing to do with a *man*; and he, considering the roe destitute of feeling, has kept aloof from *women*. How nice it would be if we were [each to break our vow of celibacy and] to marry one another!'

¹ *Lit.*, "flies hundreds of *koses* from the name."

² *Lit.*, "If our marriage were with him, how fine it would be!"

“The upshot was, that the very next day the princess despatched her Vakīl¹ to His Majesty, and signified her assent to the marriage service being performed.”

The parrot having reached this part of his tale, said to Khojista, “My lady, you say that you will renounce your friendship with this man. If such a resolution could be kept by anyone, then that princess would never have married the King of China. Well, now! ignore such a speech, and cherish with the utmost warmth your joyous attachment to your lover.”² On hearing this, Khojista was just about to repair to him and throw her arms round him, when the morning chimes sounded, and the cock crew, so that her visit was again deferred. She thereupon heaved involuntary sighs, while repeating these lines:—

“Would that to-night my life had ended been!
And that another dawn I'd never seen!”³

¹ *i.e.*, ambassador.

² *Lit.*, “From that speech, please lift up your hands, and please make warm the companionship of pleasure with your beloved.”

³ Or (literally) “Oh, that to-night my soul had gone!
And God not shown another dawn!”

TALE XXXIV.

OF THE DONKEY AND THE NOBLE STAG,¹ AND HOW THEY WERE
BOTH CAUGHT.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Kho-
jista, with her tiny neck and plump arms, her finely-
developed bust² and delicate body,³ her stately stature
and protuberant⁴ hips, her glossy thighs and handsome
legs—frowning, and full of amorous desires—

“Such beauty did she then display—
Such overpowering loveliness—
That ev’n the resurrection-day,
Its homage—bowing—must express.”⁵

¹ *Lit.*, “A stag of twelve tyne.”

² *Lit.*, “Swelling, or (full-grown) breasts.”

³ *Lit.*, “Belly.”

⁴ Round.

⁵ *Lit.*, “Her height and stature was a perfect piece of calamity, which the day of resurrection, bowing, might salute.” The meaning is rather obscure, but seems to be that her stature and beauty were so imposing, as to be fatal to beholders (the shafts of Cupid transfixing their hearts), and that the resurrection-day (personified)—so important and undistinguishing

[Khojista, we say, exhibiting such charms,] repaired to the parrot to take leave of him, and thus addressed him:—"I have been frequently told, parrot, by respectable individuals, that a certain king named 'Abdu-l-'Aziz used neither to sleep at night nor take rest during the day. Some one once asked him the reason of this, to whom he replied, 'My dear sir, if I should sleep at night, divine worship must be neglected; and, were I to take rest during the day, my subjects would be utterly ruined. For this reason I do not allow myself to sleep, either by night or by day.' Such is just my condition, too, and I am in a constant quandary, for, if I go to my lover, then I shall have to give up my husband, and if I remain at home, I shall lose my lover's affections. Hence it seems best that I should keep away from both, and preserve my honour and chastity by remaining¹ in seclusion, in conformity with the poet's exhortation:—

'O cease to appear of varied hue,
 Be of one colour—not of two!
 Either be wax—and wax alone—
 Or else be altogether stone!' "²

in general—showing no respect of persons, would make an exception in her case, and pay her special attention. The word *Kiyāmat* ("resurrection, calamity") seems a play on the previous words, *Kāmat* ("height") and *Āfat* ("calamity.") Compare the lines in Tale 24, p. 154, and note.

¹ *Lit.*, "With honour and chastity, remain."

² *Lit.*, "Abandon two-colouredness; become of one colour. Be wholly wax, or else become stone."

On hearing these words, the parrot burst into a loud laugh, and said, "So now, Khojista, you are looking after your chastity! All very fine! But remember, there is a time for everything! Listen to me, my lady; it is a well-known proverb, 'When Cupid joins two hearts, soon modesty departs.'¹

'When lovers have become insane,
What then their honour will retain?
When once a maid has lost her heart,
With what will she refuse to part?'²

O lady! what are you now thinking of? Well now, the way you talk reminds me of the donkey that, having burst out into a loud bray, at an unseasonable moment, was caught in consequence." Khojista asked him to tell her the story; so he went on:—
"They say that, once on a time, a certain donkey was on friendly terms with a twelve-tyne stag, and they used to feed together in one and the same forest. It so happened that one night in spring they repaired together to a certain garden to eat grass there. When they had well filled their stomachs, the ass remarked to the stag, 'Now I am desirous that we

¹ *Lit.*, "When love begins (or affects one) then, where is shame (or modesty?)"

² *Lit.*, "When a lover has become mad, what preservative is there of honour? Dost thou hear, O fool? when the heart has been given, then, what after that?"

should give vent to our hearts' delight, in harmony, and sing a song together; for my brain is delightfully excited by the odoriferous breezes, and the cool air has imparted joy to my heart.' On hearing this, the deer replied, 'Well done! this is just carrying out the old saying, "A dish of boiled rice to please¹ the donkey!" Mind yourself, and if you must say something, then tell about your pack-saddle, and how the *dhobi* (washerman) fastens and ties it on. What nonsense you are prating! Know for certain; that there is no noise worse than your braying. What's the use of a donkey attempting to sing? You and I have come into this garden by stealth;² if at this time you shall sing out your peculiar melody, then, assuredly, the gardener will be startled up from his slumbers, and will call for some people to help him, and then you will both yourself be tied up, and cause me to be beaten. If so, it would be just like what happened in the story of the thieves, who from their stupidity came to grief,³ and were caught.* I have heard that one night some thieves went out together, to rob the house of a certain rich man. Having found in his sumptuous abode a flagon full of wine, they said to themselves, 'Now, happen what may, let us at present

¹ *Lit.*, "Pleases," i.e., the donkey has become so dainty, that nothing will please him but a dish of boiled rice. By being pampered, he forgets that he is *only* a donkey and has extravagant desires.

² Or, "as thieves."

³ *Lit.*, "Experienced a shock."

drink up the wine in this place and enjoy ourselves till it is near time for commencing our work of plunder. After that, let us make off with as much as each one can carry, and, having gone home, let us treasure up the articles we have stolen.' Having so determined, they continued drinking the wine and enjoying themselves till midnight, when, having become intoxicated, they began to make an uproar, and at the same time to plunder the house. In short, they were—while in this state of intoxication—actually making off with some things, and tying up others, when the master of the house awoke, and, having collected together his domestics, secured the whole set of them.

“The donkey replied, ‘God forgive me! what do *you* know about it? I am a city-resident and passionately fond of singing,¹ while you are only a wretched forester; what acquaintance have you with such enjoyments? so *I will* sing, and what harm will it do you to listen to me?’ So, notwithstanding his having heard the above story (of the thieves), the ass would not take the stag’s advice, but stretching out his mouth towards the sky he began to pour forth an inharmonious ditty. Meanwhile the gardener made his appearance, and having called some men to his aid,

¹ *Lit.*, “die for singing.”

put an end to both of them, by crucifying them with four pegs."

The parrot, having finished his story, said, "My lady, whoever does not act according to present circumstances will have the like experience. It is proper madam, that everyone should ascertain the peculiarities of each occasion [in order to know how to act]. At present you had better go and fulfil the hopes of your desponding lover." Khojista, on hearing this, was about to repair to him, but just then it dawned, the cock crew, and her visit was again deferred. She repeated this couplet, and burst into tears,—

"Wherefore, O dawn, dost thou thy spite retain,
And ever keep me from my moon-faced swain?"¹

¹ *Lit.*, "Why hast thou separated me from that moon-browed one of mine? O spiteful dawn, what cruelty is this thou hast been guilty of."

TALE XXXV.

OF A KING WHO FELL IN LOVE WITH THE PRINCESS OF TURKEY;
AND (FINALE OF THE LEADING STORY) OF THE DEATH OF
KHOJISTA BY THE HAND OF HER HUSBAND.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arisen, Khojista, full of hope, once more repaired to the parrot to take leave of him, and said, "O parrot, I come to you every night and tell you all about my state of disquietude, but you are not worth your salt, and you never send me on my way comfortably.¹ Alas for my destiny!

' With fear and reverence at God's throne I pray—
Yea, long and oft do I my prayers say ;
For He alone hath pow'r to grant to me,
A dying wretch, my lover's face to see.'²

¹ *Lit.*, "Do not at all perform the duty of salt, and do not give me leave with cool mind (or heart)."

² *Lit.*, "Fearing continually, I speak in the presence of God. For a long

Do not sprinkle salt, in such a degree, on my wounded heart; and do not persecute me so in my affliction. It is only right that you should give me leave at once." The parrot replied, "Khojista, go this very night, any way it can be best managed, and embrace your beloved. [As the poet says:—]

" Our worldly business must, indeed, be done,
But friendly intercourse is life's best boon :¹
So, day and night,
Let us unite,
In quaffing cups of luscious wine!
With envy, then, the sun and moon
Will burn, and grudge on us to shine;
For bliss so bright
Would throw into the shade the light of noon."²

If anyone else, besides me, should get intelligence of the affair, then you must have recourse to just such a device as the Princess of Turkey made use of, and so preserved her character unsullied."³

while past I keep saying my prayers. To Him is there the power to grant to a secluded (or wretched) one like me, that, dying, I may see the face of my friend."

¹ Or, "Life's highest boon—all worldly joys above—
Consists in meeting with the friends we love."

² *Lit.*, "Thus, indeed, all [our] worldly business [must be attended to]; but the result (or object) of life is the union (or meeting) of friends. Night and day drinking wine together, make the sun and moon roast-meat from envy."

³ *Lit.*, "Along with that chastity" (more literally, "spotlessness of skirt,") i.e., retaining her reputed chastity.

Khojista asked what the story was he referred to ; so the parrot thus proceeded :—

“ A certain king once had his residence in the confines of the Turkish Empire. It so happened that his wazīr one day remarked to him, ‘ Your majesty, the King of Turkey has *such* a beautiful daughter,’¹

“ Beauty so lustrous, were the moon to view,
From sheerest envy it would split in two.”

What a fine thing it would be, if he were to give you his daughter in marriage!’ The king highly approved of the wazīr’s observation, and forthwith despatched an ambassador to the sovereign of Turkey, with a handsome present, and a message requesting his daughter’s hand.

“ When the messenger presented his despatches to the Turkish king, his majesty was greatly enraged with him, and said, ‘ What can your sovereign think of me, envoy, that he should send me such a mes-

¹ *Lit.*, “ has such a lovely daughter, that enough ! ” But in sentences of this kind, “ *ki bas* ” is not to be translated in English. The words mean simply that the speaker will say no more—the thing is *indescribable*. The succeeding couplet is almost untranslatable, it is so hyperbolic. *Lit.*, “ She (or it) is a life-increasing (or animating) light (*i.e.*, beauty) of a wondrous sort, before which the moon would become a fragment (or potsherd). ” That is, the light (or beauty) of her countenance was so bright, that the full moon would split asunder—into fragments—from envy, on beholding it.

sage? If I were to exert my full strength, I could crush his sovereignty to dust. What shall I say to you?—Fare you—out of my presence! You had better not show your face here again. Take care, or it will be the worse for you.’¹

“The poor man was all in trepidation at the rage of the king, and returned home in a most despondent state.

‘The sight of him enraged, inspired such dread,
The man—though living—one might say was dead.’

Reduced thus to the last extremity, he fled back to his own sovereign,³ and narrated to him all that had taken place there.

“The story was anything but pleasing to the king. Without waiting an hour, he set out with a victorious army, and at once invaded and devastated the kingdom of the offending sovereign. When the latter had been reduced to the greatest straits, seeing that there was no other remedy, he consented to give his daughter in marriage to the conqueror, retaining with him the boy whom she had had by her previous husband. Then,

¹ *Lit.*, “Your welfare consists in this.”

² *Lit.*, “Seeing him in a rage, he was frightened. One might say then, though actually living, he was dead.”

³ *Lit.*, “Fleeing thus, on his last legs, he came to his king.”

having charged his daughter never to say anything to her new consort about her former spouse, he dismissed the new-wedded pair. The royal bridegroom, thereupon returned with the princess to his own city, and enjoyed with her, for a time, the greatest felicity.

“After a while, however, the young queen, distressed at the separation from her son, would often give way to floods of tears. In her grief, she determined in her mind to make some such representation to the king as might induce him to send for the young man. While thus contemplating, the king, one day, brought her a casket filled with the most costly jewels. The princess thereupon remarked, ‘You have, no doubt, heard that at my father’s court there is a slave who is so wonderfully clever, that—what shall I say?—well, for instance, he is thoroughly acquainted with the intrinsic worth and defects of all jewels. If he were here now, he could test and appraise these jewels, and tell us which are good and which [comparatively] bad.’ The king replied, ‘If I were to ask your father for the slave you mention, do you think he would let me have him, or not?’ ‘Probably he would *not* give him you,’ answered the princess, ‘for my dear father has brought him up from his childhood, like one of his own children. But if you really wish for him, and think proper to send for him, then I will, on my own part, send a merchant, and conveying through him

a peculiar token of my own, will excite hopes in the young man of his condition being bettered: *then*, perhaps, his majesty may send him, and he may actually come.'

"Accordingly the king, in conformity with her advice, dispatched to Turkey a very wealthy and discreet merchant, for the avowed purpose of trading. At the time when the said merchant, in accordance with the king's instructions, taking with him money and goods, was about to set out, the princess (concealing the fact from the king) thus addressed him:— 'That boy, merchant, is not a slave; he is my own son. Through grief on his account, I have become very unwell. There was a particular reason for my telling the king that he was my *slave-boy*; but it is proper that you, in bringing him here, should not *treat* him as a slave.' Well, after a few days, the merchant set out, and, on his arrival at his destination, by one means or other, succeeded in obtaining the lad—having begged him of the sovereign—and conveyed him safe to his own monarch. When the latter found the youth to be both handsome and clever, he was greatly delighted. On the merchant he bestowed a splendid robe of honour, and retained the lad in his own immediate service. His mother used to see him from a distance, and, by salutations and messages from him, her heart was filled with joy.

"It so happened that the king one day went out a hunting. Taking advantage of the opportunity, the princess sent for the boy into her own private apartments. There she embraced him, kissed his mouth and forehead, and told him of all her past grief. That very hour some spies conveyed the intelligence to the king, that the princess had that day sent for the slave-boy into the seraglio, and made him sit beside her. The king, on hearing this news (which might well fill him with consternation), was pained to the heart, and said to himself:—'Well may I be afraid of such a woman, who thus throws dust in my eyes!'¹ What a trick she has played, in order to send for her paramour from Turkey! My God! what check to be sure!'² Then, hastily returning from the chase, he entered the palace, and seated himself on a jewelled chair, overwhelmed with anxious thoughts.

"At this conjuncture, the princess caught sight of the king, and, discovering that something was wrong, said to him, 'Something seems to have vexed your Royal Highness to-day—what is the reason of it?' 'Very fine!' replied the king. 'You have sent for your lover from Turkey, lain with him, and been guilty

¹ *Lit.*, "Makes a wall on my sight."

² *Lit.*, "O God, liver!" (*i.e.*, what a liver she must have!) answering perhaps nearly to our slang phrase, "What cheek!"—language not very becoming a king—but quite as much, probably, as "*Allah ro kalija!*" in his own tongue.

of adultery ! What shameless wantonness !' He was about to kill her ; but, how¹ can a lover slay his mistress ? Then he said to himself, ' Instead of my wife, let me kill the slave.' Having thus determined, he beckoned to an executioner, and ordered him to behead the youth that very hour. On hearing this, the executioner seized hold of the lad, and, carrying him to the place of execution, thus questioned him :— ' Ill-fated youth ! did you not know that that lady was the king's royal consort ? Were *I* to make love to her, how could I escape with my life ? And how did you presume² to enter the royal seraglio ?' The boy replied, ' Do not speak thus ; she is my own mother. When my father died, then she became the wife of His Majesty, but through [false] shame told him nothing about me. I will not tell an untruth, whether you kill or spare me.'

' I am entirely in thy pow'r ;

What, though I still may be in life ?

When once my neck's beneath the knife,

What good to live another hour ?'³

"The executioner, on hearing these words, was

¹ *Lit.*, when.

² *Lit.*, "Advance your step."

³ *Lit.*, "I am in thy power. Say (suppose) I am now living—what then ? or, that anyone has remained for a short while under the scimitar—what then ?" (or, what matters it ?)

touched with compassion, and refrained from putting him to death, saying to himself, 'Should it come to the knowledge of the king that this is her son, [then it is very likely he may say to me]¹ why did you put him to death? and, on account of the queen, he may demand back the boy from me. Then, if I should not bring him to him alive, I too should be slain in like manner by the hand of another.'

"Entertaining these thoughts in his mind, the executioner sought an audience of His Majesty, and thus addressed him:—'Asylum of the world! [with your permission] I will take the culprit away with me to some desert spot utterly destitute of water, and there put him to death.'²

"Accordingly, under this pretext, he took the lad away from the king to his own house and there kept him concealed. After two days, he again entered into His Majesty's presence and said, 'Refuge of the world! his (the boy's) head has been offered as a sacrifice at your august feet.' At length, on hearing these words, the fierceness³ of the king's anger became slightly abated—but he had lost all confidence in the princess

¹ This is not in the original, but is evidently to be understood, and is probably an inadvertent omission in the text.

² *Lit.*, "Going there, where even the name of water will not be, I will kill that person deserving of death"

³ *Lit.*, "fire."

—whilst, in *her* bosom, the fire of affection burned more fiercely than ever.

‘A mother’s heart, though strengthened, she retained—
A heart that, still, in bud or bloom remained.’¹

“Weeping uncontrollably, she said to herself, ‘What a plight is this I am in! On the one hand, my son dead—on the other, my husband alienated!’²

“It so happened that, one day a certain old woman who lived in her establishment said to her, ‘My lady, what manner of grief³ is this you indulge in on account of this young man, that, night and day⁴ you should remain lying thus on your couch, with your face covered up?’ Then the queen recounted to her all that had befallen her. Upon which the old woman rejoined, ‘Keep up your spirits, princess, I shall by a stratagem make your royal spouse as kind to you as ever, and bring him again into the zanāna.’ ‘Kind mother,’ replied the princess, ‘if thou wilt heal this heart⁴ wound, then I will fill thy bosom and skirt with

¹ *Lit.*, “Assuming heart (courage) the mother indeed still remained. Like a bud she remained blooming.” Forbes has in the text مار (*mār*) instead of ل, the reading of the edition edited by Dr. Gilchrist. *Mār* is no doubt a misprint.

² *Lit.*, “Escaped,” “gone off.”

³ *Lit.*, “Grief of what” (*sōrt*, understood).

⁴ All eight watches.

jewels.' The sequel was that one day the said old woman, seeing the king alone, thus addressed him :—
 'Please Your Majesty,¹ why is it that I see you to-day somewhat more thoughtful and concerned than on other days? Gladly would I take all your calamities on me.² [I hope] all is well?'

'So God thy youth would ever fill with glee,
 This poor old woman fain would die for thee!'³

"The king replied, 'Kind mother, I have a grief for which there is no remedy, and which cannot be fully told. The case [in brief] is this:—"The princess sent for a young slave from Turkey, with whom she was enamoured, and I had him put to death. But I cannot slay the princess, for God only knows whether the charge [as to her criminal connexion with the lad] be true or false."'

"On hearing this, the old woman said, 'I have in my possession a charm, the efficacy of which consists in this, that on whosoever breast, while sleeping, it is placed, that individual spontaneously tells out all the circumstances of his (or her) life. I will write the talisman, and give it you. Then you, having put

¹ *Lit.*, "King of kings."

² *Lit.*, "I would become a (vicarious) sacrifice."

³ *Lit.*, "May my Creator keep thee always glad! [May] an old woman [be] a sacrifice for this thy youth!"

it on her bosom, will see that she of her own accord will give expression to all that is in her heart.' The king replied, 'Bring the talisman quickly!' The old woman thereupon, that very hour, fetched and gave it to him, and forthwith repaired to the princess; to whom she said, 'At close of eve to-day, you must pretend to be asleep. Then, when the king shall place the charm on your breast, you, princess, as if speaking in a dream, must narrate in full every particular of your sad case.'

"The sequel is, that, when the first watch of the night had ended, the king placed the talisman on the bosom of the princess, whereupon she told out every circumstance relating to her former husband and the said boy (their son). The king having heard all, awoke her, and showing her the greatest kindness, pressed her to his bosom, and said, 'My love, why was it you did not tell me this secret at the first?' 'What circumstance'—asked she, as if perplexed,—'did I conceal from you?' 'That, young man,' replied the king, 'was your own son; why did you pretend that he was a slave?' Then, with downcast countenance, she said, 'I was ashamed; I would have told you, but did not know how.'

"The king, that very hour, sent for the execu-

¹ *Lit.*, "[If] I would say, how should I say (it)?"

tioner, and said to him, 'Quickly bring that young man to me. If he has been killed, then tell me where his grave is.' The officer replied, 'Asylum of the world! as yet I have not put him to death, so that, through the grace of God, he is still alive and in health.'¹ On hearing this, the king was greatly delighted; and immediately sending for the lad, he presented him to his mother. She—who had lost all hope of ever seeing him again—pressed him to her bosom, and forthwith repaired to the house of God to return thanks [to the Almighty for his restoration to her]."²

The parrot, having finished this story, said, "My mistress, should *you too* fall into any difficulty, then tell some such story as this; well, now go and have your meeting with your lover. Khojista, on hearing this, was about to repair thither; but, just then, it began to dawn and the cock crew, so her visit was deferred that day too. She burst into tears, and repeated these lines:—"

"One thing, O dawn! most certain is to me,
The night of meeting never shall I see."³

Meanwhile Maimūn, Khojista's husband, returned

¹ *Lit.*, "is existing, alive and awake."

² *Lit.*, "taking him in her lap, performed the service of thanksgiving in the temple of God."

³ Almost literal.

from his travels, and seeing the *maina's* cage empty, exclaimed, "Where has my *maina* flown to?" Khojista got no opportunity of telling him [anything about it], before the parrot thus addressed him. "Respected sire,¹ my humble respects to you! You have got back at last! Please to listen attentively to what I may tell you. As to the *maina* and my mistress Khojista, you had better ask *me*, and I will tell you all about them." Maimūn replied, "Say, then, what you have got to say." "Well," said the parrot, "your honour's lady, for the sake of her lover, wrung the *maina's* neck, and killed her, and wanted to kill me too; well, [thank God!] I have been spared to see your honour's feet once more; but she, poor thing, has been sacrificed."

"What is this," replied Maimūn, "that you are prating forth?" "I swear by my Creator," said the parrot, "that your lady, my mistress, having formed an improper intimacy with a certain young man, it was on *his* account that the *maina* was killed." On hearing this, Maimūn could no longer restrain his rage, and with one blow of his scimitar put an end to Khojista's life.

God knows best what is just and right—He knows the liar and the truth-speaker. God Almighty preserve the honour of every one!

¹ *Lit.*, "Venerable instructor."

On the 28th day of Zī Ka'ada (the 11th Mahomedan month) of the year, marked in front (or at the beginning of the work) on Thursday evening, by the grace of God, this sweet-worded story was brought most successfully to an end, and the name of *Totā Kahānī* given to it.

When Haidari had brought, at last, this story to an end,
A heavenly message from on high he heard to earth descend,
To this effect :—" The name that you have given these Tales is
And in a line, containing it, if rightly understood, [good ;
You have the date on which this work you've managed to con-
You only need to take away the final letter ā, [clude :
The date is then in *Rakhā nām Totā Kahānī b'jā*.¹

[Which notes the year *one eight one five* (1815) from flight of
Mohammed, [instead :]
And answers to *one eight nought one* (1801) from birth of Christ,

¹ *Lit.*, "When the story was completed by Haidari, then a voice from heaven, having heard its name, said, 'Having deducted the beginning of (the word) *āh* (i.e. *ā*), you have well given it the name *Totā Kahānī* (as) proper.'"

² This date, expressed by the numerical value of the letters contained in the above line, is brought out as follows :—

ر (r) = 200	ب (f) = 400	ن (n) = 50	1216
ک (k) = 20	و (o) = 6	ي (i) = 10 — (a) = -1	
س (h) = 5	ط (t) = 400	ب (b) = 2	—
(ā) = 1	(ā) = 1	ج (j) = 3	1215 A. H.
ن (n) = 50	ک (k) = 20	(ā) = 1	+ 586
(ā) = 1	ه (h) = 5	—	—
م (m) = 40	(ā) = 1	66	1801 A.D.
—	—	833	
317	833	317	
		1216	

It is well known that the letter *Toe* (ط), is not in the Hindī alphabet, and this contemptible individual (the translator), has written the Persian *Tūtī Nāma* in Urdū, and, therefore, has changed the *Toe* (ط) of *Tūtī* (طوطي) into the Hindūstānī *Te* (ت).¹

See Forbes's Hindūstānī Grammar, §§ 19 and 91. These two last lines are added by the English translator and are not in the original.

¹ This was very unnecessary, and the reason assigned a fallacy, inasmuch as his translation was written in the Persi-Arabic character. Even if it had been written in the Hindī (Nāgarī) character, the nearest approach to the Persian ط, would be the cerebral ट, represented in the Urdu alphabet by ط (Ta).

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